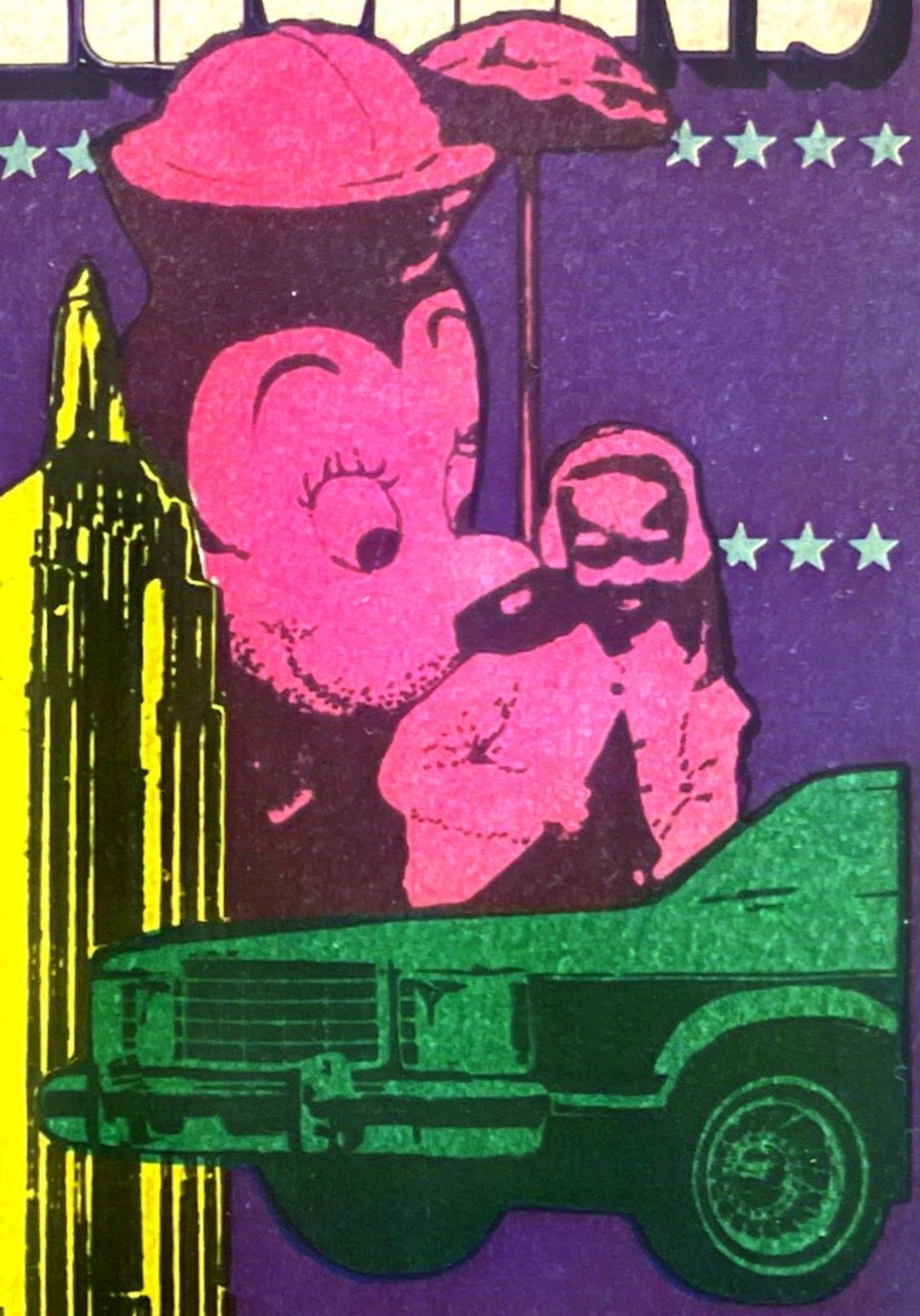
Vladimir Nikolayev

THE AMERICANS

As Seen by a Soviet Writer



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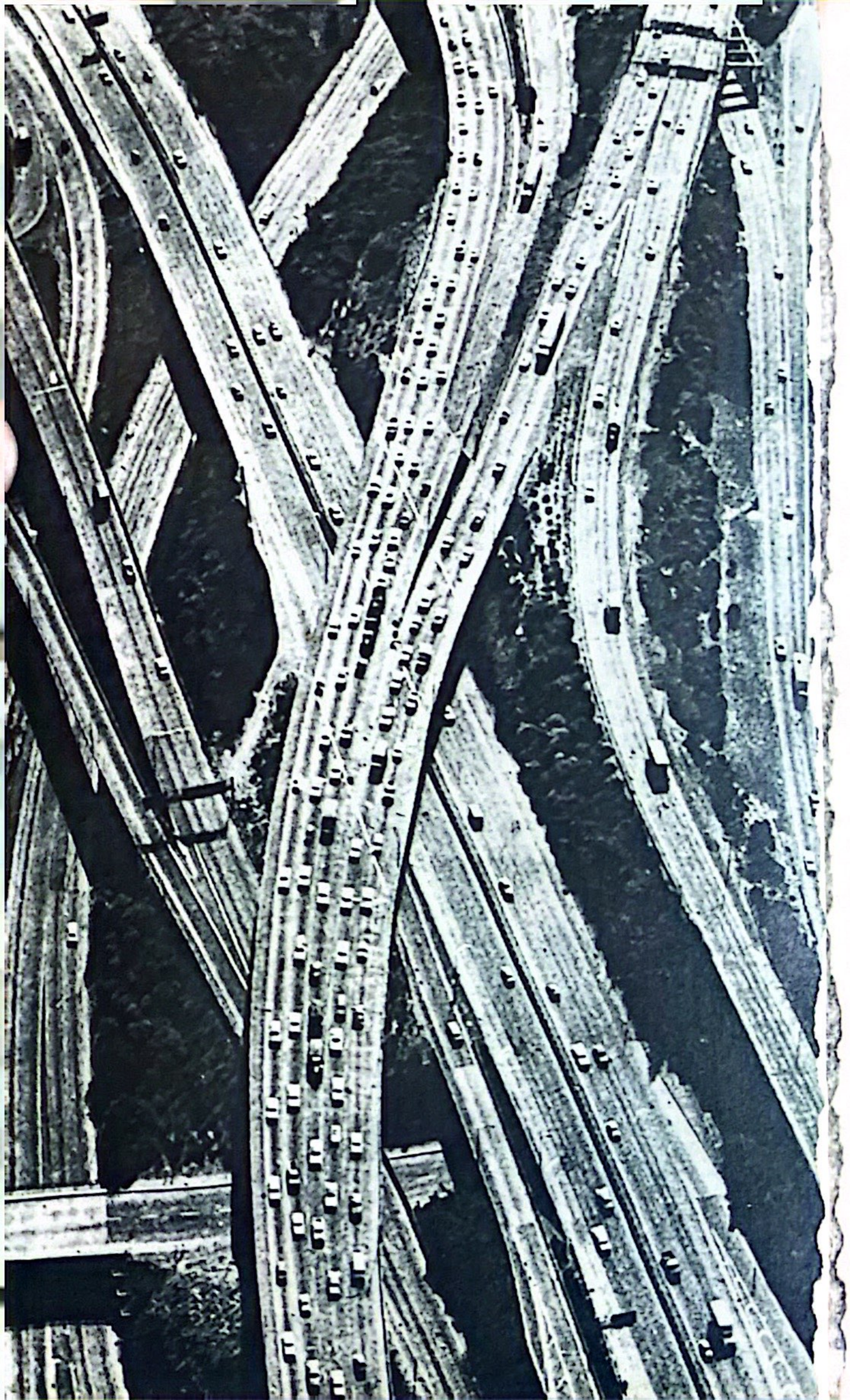

Vladimir Nikolayev

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As Seen
by a Soviet Writer

Progress
Publishers
Moscow

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

My first meetings with Americans took place during World War Il, when I was in the Northern Fleet. (I served in the Soviet Navy from 1941 to 1947). In the years of the Soviet people's Great Patriotic War against the Nazi invaders, it was from the northern ports that the vitally important sea routes to Britain and the United States began, and it was not uncommon to find American and British sailors there.

When I was demobilized in 1947 I was still a very young man. I went on to study journalism at Moscow University, and not long after graduating began work as a correspondent writing on international affairs. My career as a journalist has taken me to many countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas, but my special interest is the United States, and telling Soviet readers about America has been my life's work.

I first traveled to the United States in 1958, when I made a long car trip in the company of some American friends. Since then I have visited the USA regularly as a journalist and seen a good deal of the country. I have been a guest in the homes of many Americans — a farmer and a factory worker, a businessman and a clergyman, a lawyer and a writer. When I was younger I stayed in student dormitories. I have spent hundreds of hours talking with Americans, and for a quarter of a century have been a faithful reader of the American press and kept up on the latest books by American authors.

Over the years I have written quite a few articles, sketches, feuilletons, and pamphlets. These have served as the basis for my fourteen books about the USA, of which the present work, first brought out by the publishing house Sovetsky Pisatel, is the most recent. The original Russian version found readers in the United States as well. The American University in Washington, D.C., has assigned passages from it for translation to students in its Russian courses.

The book is primarily addressed to readers who have never been in the United States. In telling about everyday life and customs in the USA, about the values and inner world of Americans, and about features of American business and politics, I have been aware that to such readers much of what I describe may seem strange and sometimes even repellent. A multitude of knotty questions arises, regarding which I write: "These questions are natural. But they have one

meaning for us in the Soviet Union, and another one for Americans. And when answers are proposed an even greater difference in attitude is bound to surface. This is unavoidable. It must be understood, and kept in mind as we look at various sides of American life... In my opinion, one of the main reasons for the obstacles we so frequently encounter in trying to establish different kinds of Soviet-American contacts is precisely this difficulty in understanding one another. The only way to overcome it is to observe with an open mind. Not to be irritated when we come across something that puzzles, but instead to make a calm, concentrated effort to see it for what it really is. And above all, not to jump to conclusions."

The attentive reader will notice that much of what is said here about the American way of life (including the criticisms) comes from the Americans themselves — both from people I have talked with and from journalists, sociologists, and historians whose writings I have used. I regard such evidence as valid and telling. At the same time, an outsider's view can on occasion be of equal value.

I have always felt respect for the talented and industrious American people, and see my chief duty in helping to promote better relations between the USSR and the USA, which would bring an improvement of the international climate as a whole.

THE AMERICANS

The Context of Life

Suppertime. I am in a provincial American town. My hosts are educated, comfortably well-off people.

The unfailing preliminary cocktails have been drunk, and now we are finishing our ample meal. The conversation grows more and more animated and familiar. As will happen when people are getting to know one another, talk turns to loved ones, to parents and children. My host proudly introduces his teenaged son, a pleasant looking youngster. He is in school, of course. And of course he is crazy about sports. There is one more interesting detail. "He's quite a businessman," says his father with a smile of satisfaction. "He has his own incubator." The boy, I learn, raises chickens for sale — on his own, without help from anybody. And he makes money; that is, the end result is a profit. His achievement obviously requires knowledge of a highly specialized technology, and something else as well: the ability to handle money. If he profits by his efforts, he must be connected with the market, and so must understand market conditions and like matters. Simply put, he is not just a young animal lover.

Here my faithful memory recalls the description of Frank Cowperwood's early years in Dreiser's *The Financier*. Young Frank "would watch with great interest the deft exchange of bills at the brokerage end of the business... His father, pleased at his interest, was glad to explain so that even at this early age— from ten to fifteen — the boy gained a wide knowledge of the condition of the country financially." Frank put his knowledge to use and made thirty dollars speculating in soap — his first commercial venture — when he was thirteen. A few years later the junior Cowperwood was to make his appearance as another big dealer on the American financial scene.

The example is not a fresh one, and is borrowed from a novel at that. But here we have the present, the reality of American life today. A page from a newspaper. "Kid capitalists," the prominent headline reads. There is a subhead too: "Free enterprise is dead, right? Wrong!" At the center of the page is a large photograph. Three boys and a girl. They are the subject of the article — the USA's youngest capitalists.

Seventeen-year-old Andrew Farkas has already made half a million dollars on his own. How? Andrew says he launched his business career at fourteen, when he got the idea of adapting

computers for the needs of small business and turned his first profit. Andrew sees himself as a capitalist.

Karen Washington, also seventeen, has been less successful in life: she has made only $100,000. Karen says she got her start at fifteen. She took out a loan and began buying clothes by the lot to sell retail. She has no social life. There will be plenty of years later to enjoy such things, she says. After all, she is only seventeen. Karen does not excell in her school work, either. She has set herself a different goal in life.

Eric Shawn has fifteen people working for him already, and says that in the near future the number will increase to ninety. His parents, like those of other youthful entrepreneurs, are delighted. "My father feels very good about what I'm doing," Eric told the *Daily News*, "and my grandmother loves it."

David Rose also has fifteen employees. He gets average grades. The business is growing, he says.

The New York *Daily News*, like the young people's parents, heartily approves. To me, this article is a striking example of how Americans take for granted a moral climate that we find strange (to put it mildly) and unacceptable. The difference is especially noticeable when you live side by side with an American under the same roof, as his guest. Over the years I have eaten a good many lunches and suppers in American homes. On various occasions I have been the houseguest of a worker, a clergyman, a factory owner, a scholar, and a farmer. I have stayed in student dormitories. It is certainly not every American who gets started by raising chicks or speculating in soap. Still less does every American have in him the makings of a wheelerdealer. In one way or another, however, they all come into contact early on with the financial side of life. And not because they all find it so alluring. A flare for business is an American trait, but by no means a universal one. Regardless of desire or inclination, though, every American is forced to count and calculate. In stating this fact, I do not want in the least to belittle Americans. That is simply the way life there is. What is more, you sometimes find yourself looking a bit dense in the midst of people who are so adept at keeping track of every penny.

In Los Angeles I rented a car for several days. After filling out a rather long and complicated form, the man at the counter finally named the sum I would have to pay. I counted out the dollars. He counted them over again, and immediately began to fill out a second, no less complicated, form. I was surprised: Why this additional paper? This, I was told, was for the deposit (slightly over a hundred dollars) I would have to make against possible damages. If I returned the car in good condition, the money would be returned to me at once. If I broke something, it would go towards repairs. Hoping save a few minutes by skipping the additional form, I suggested that he take the money from me, put it in the safe, and give it back when I returned the car if everything was in good order. He could fill out the form later if there were any damages; it seemed to me there was no reason to waste time on it otherwise. The clerk stared at me in amazement at such an idea. Of course the form had to be filled out now. My hundred dollars would be entered in the books and then, instead of lying idle in his safe, would become another drop in the ocean of the company's financial operations. How much interest would a hundred dollars earn in the three or four days I kept the car? Could those few cents be worth the cost of the form and the time it required to fill it out? The questions of a dilettante! "If I don't make out this form," the man told me, "I'll be fired." Four days later, after returning the car safe and sound, I received from the same clerk a paper to take to the bank for a refund of my deposit. By the way, although I did not have time in Los Angeles — I had to rush to the airport — I got my money back in New York after handing over that same paper.

No doubt I looked a little simple-minded—or at least short on acumen — to the car-rental man. What he thought of me is not the point, though. The point is that he, like other Americans, takes a completely different view of many things than we do in the Soviet Union. He takes a completely different view, for instance, of a teenager raising chicks for profit, or of little Frank Cowperwood speculating in soap.

Is there anything wrong, really, with a youngster's raising chicks, and even making money from it? For that matter, what was wrong with Frank's harmless dealings on the market? He wasn't stealing, after all. He earned what he made. In the United States young people are commonly encouraged to start earning money early. But what lies behind this tradition? Parents' desire to have their children learn at first hand the meaning of work? Or the hope that they will bring in something extra? And what is it that motivates the youngsters — love of work, or simple avarice?

Such questions are natural. But we in the Soviet Union mean one thing by them, Americans something else. And an

even greater difference will certainly appear when answers are proposed. This is inevitable, and must be kept in mind in trying to approach various aspects of American life. Different social systems? Yes, of course. But America and Russia were following different paths of development long before the opening of the social gap that now divides us. Here, for example, is what a Russian observer who knew America well wrote home to his readers almost a hundred years ago:

"Let me be permitted to address a friendly word of advice to those who will read these lines. They will see in America much that is strange, incomprehensible, and unnatural. If they go beyond the hotels and the paths beaten by the exhibition crowd [the reference is to the Chicago World's Fair of 1893— *V. N.*], they will of course notice much that will seem to them dirty, vulgar, and inexplicable in a republic which takes pride in its unprecedented wealth and is bold enough to assert that it is the very embodiment of the last word in human progress.

"Let them not hasten to condemn that which they observe thus in passing and for which they find no reasonable explanation near to hand. An American, if appealed to, will probably be able to explain everything precisely, but the trouble will be that such an answer, given from a purely American point of view, will sometimes not only fail to satisfy the Russian visitor but indeed seem to be even stranger, to obscure the question even more. An American thinks and looks at things in his own, American, way, and his explanation, perfectly rational for those accustomed to his manner of thinking and world view, will seem outlandish and inappropriate to a Russian intellectual.

"I say this from experience. What is more, by an odd coincidence I have recently come across a number of books and magazine articles on Russia written by Americans. The authors are obviously persons of conscience, intelligence, and mature judgment, who undoubtedly have seen with their own eyes everything of which they write. But my Heavens, the comical and absurd mistakes they make at times! The wild explanations they give for the purely Russian facts of our national life, facts that I know full well! Reading between the lines, you see that these facts were explained to them by some Russian, explained correctly, but nonetheless remained utterly beyond their comprehension because their American way of thinking could not encompass the explanation. Instead, the authors took it after their own fashion, usually topsy-turvy. And so they come to write things that are completely untrue and offer ridiculous and meaningless explanations and commentaries, misleading thousands of readers who are used to taking authors at their word.

"It is against such errors, which I consider unpardonable in an educated person, that I wish to warn my fellow-countrymen. If some things here seem to them outlandish and odd, let them not forget that they are Russians, who look at the world around them from their own, Russian, point of view. Let them recall that American life was formed and proceeds in its own way, that conditions here are often diametrically opposed to those in Russia, and that to understand them it is not enough to visit two or three cities, ride for a day on the railroad, and chat with a few dozen strangers."

So it is not just a matter of the different social and moral climates prevailing today. The question is more complex, and deeper. As we have seen, it is rooted in a tradition over a hundred years old. And when I say, for example, that an American cannot help but count money all his life, I am not implying that Americans are a nation of misers or, if you will, tightwads. Not at all! It is simply that without this skill an American cannot survive in his own society. He lives in a dense forest of figures, and has to devote considerable effort to keeping his bearings in it.

Everyone in the United States can handle figures, then, and many people no doubt learn to enjoy doing this. Absolutely everything gets counted, too. With the help of modern electronics calculations involving every side of life can now be made very efficiently, in keeping with our fast-moving times.

But the main thing an American counts is, of course, his own money. (And his counting is nothing like our own quick estimates of how much we have left till payday). The reason is not necessarily that he has set money up as an idol in his heart. There is simply no way to escape thinking about money in the United States. America's style of life, the laws of society there force everyone to become his own bookkeeper.

To begin with, all Americans are subject to a system of taxation that is astonishingly complex. It seems to encompass everything, and is correspondingly complicated. Suffice it to say that in addition to the federal (central) government, all the state governments have the right to levy taxes, as do various county, city, and municipal authorities — thousands of administrative units in all. It is not surprising, then, that US tax laws fill several dozen thick volumes. Each year, this immense

compendium is augmented by a welter of new regulations dictated not only by practical needs but also by the interests of the powerful financial groupings that influence legislators.

This clumsy, confusing system clearly did not come about by chance. It reminds us once again that "The law is an ass." But an ass that not just anybody can lead. The affluent find it easier to do. In the case of a working person receiving a steady wage, a fixed percentage is withheld for taxes, and that is that. Corporations and firms, by contrast, are taxed on the basis of owners' financial reports. Of course such reports are supposedly checked by the tax men, but the financial affairs of large companies (not to mention the giants) are so complex and specialized that only expert professionals can understand them fully.

Moreover, the wealthy have a whole arsenal of officially sanctioned ways to lower their income taxes. For one thing, the law permits the division of capital among members of a family. Thus if a man and wife have an income of $100,000, but divide it between them, each paying taxes on $50,000, the two of them together pay three times less than the taxes on 100,000 would be. Thousands of dollars were involved in the example, but it could be millions, or hundreds of millions. Think of the savings for millionaires and billionaires! The immensely wealthy Du Pont family, to take a well-known instance, has divided the shares in its corporate stock among all its members, more than a hundred people in all.

Another perfectly legal way of getting around having to pay taxes is the creation of special "foundations" with an eye to preserving capital. Officially these foundations are set up for philanthropic reasons, and part of their money really does go to universities, libraries, museums, hospitals, churches, and the like. The foundations would not exist, however, if they were taxed according to the regular rules. The secret lies in the great variety of exemptions granted to money set aside for them. For one thing, it does not come under the inheritance tax. Let us suppose that the head of a firm dies, passing the reins to his son. If the firm's capital has been transferred to a foundation, the son pays no taxes on the inheritance. The American economist Victor Perlo notes that over many years the Ford family, although it controls all stock in the Ford Motor Company, has paid taxes on only ten percent. The remaining ninety percent belong to the Ford Foundation, which under the existing laws is tax-exempt as a charitable organization. It should also be remembered that the owners of a

foundation can dismantle it at any time and dispose of its capital as they see fit.

Illegal devices for eluding the IRS are even more numerous. And the bigger the firm, the more easily, in principle, it can circumvent the law. The law's extreme complexity would seem to suggest strictness, vigilance, rigor. It may well be, though, that the greatest failing of this elaborate system lies precisely in its complexity. So many different things are taxable, and the rules are so tangled, that people who know all the ins and outs can match their wits against the government in the legal maze and emerge paying less. A vast army of lawyers makes its living by helping Americans in this kind of subterfuge. Of course all this is supposed to be within the bounds of the law. Such is the complexity of the system, however, that like a game of chess it entices the taxpayer into creating endless combinations, from the simple to the cunning, directed to a single aim — to pay less in taxes, to keep for himself as much as he can of what he has taken in and give as little as possible to the government.

How to accomplish this? The means are legion; they are manifold as the ways of making money. The young poultry farmer we met earlier, by the way, is supposed to pay taxes too, since his business brings him a profit. And since he pays taxes, he too is thinking of ways to pay less. The law sternly warns American parents that everything their children earn — by washing dishes in a restaurant, babysitting, pumping gas, etc.— comes under the income tax. Just as do all the earnings of adult Americans. In theory. The practice is something different.

U.S. News and World Report, an American business weekly, says that at least twenty million Americans cheat the government on their income taxes. Each year they hold back hundreds of billions of dollars that should have been turned over to the Treasury Department.

These staggering figures present the clearest possible picture of the American's mentality, the context of his life, the moral climate in which he exists. Once again according to *U.S. News and World Report* — and undoubtedly sober witness — millions of people at all levels of American society bilk the government out of taxes on money — making activities "from moonlighting and roadside fruit-stand sales to high-level corporate chicanery."

A run-of-the-mill actress in New York manages to hold down three jobs: tending bar in the evenings, helping out in her

father's jewelry store on Saturdays, and occasionally making an appearance in a night club. She receives money from all three, but pays no taxes. She is listed as a dependant of her father. "I'm completely underground," she says with a certain humor. "There are no records of anything I'm doing." Another woman, who works as a maid in several homes, also pays no taxes. In a word, there is no end to the variations.

The instances cited so far involve people employed on an irregular basis. But even those with steady jobs are also, often as not, at odds with the law. They too are dodging the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), which estimates that forty-seven percent (almost half!) of all taxpayers fail to report some part of their income. There is the taxi driver who does not record all his fares, and so pays taxes on a smaller income than he actually earns. And the traveling salesman who does the same, and the insurance agent. A lawyer, instead of charging his client a fee, accepts a present from him, on which no tax is paid. An artist does an advertisement for a firm and is paid in goods rather than cash. Once again the tax man is cut out. Another possibility is to exchange services: "I'll handle your divorce, and you fix my car." It never stops — appetite comes with eating. Many businessmen include personal outlays (clothes for their wives, furniture for their homes, etc.) among their business expenses, and thus avoid paying some of what they owe in taxes.

All that only scratches the surface, however. Taking things a little further, the owner of a small store, let us say, might keep two sets of books: one with the real figures (for himself), and one with the figures reduced (for the tax man). Many small businessmen do this. For them, "the most important thing is consistency. If you skim, skim the same amount each year. If you let one year go by without taking anything off and then take 20 percent the next, you're going to get caught." This observation comes from a California merchant who boasts that he hoodwinks the government every year at tax time. Corporations that do millions or even billions of dollars worth of business each year find their own ways of fooling the IRS. Here the game is even more surely worth the candle — the sums at stake are astronomical. Finally, the billions taken in by organized crime, in operations that have long been run along the same lines as the most modern corporations, are entirely outside the domain of the tax men.

And so it comes to be that the economy of a huge country juggles its accounts, as it were. There are official records,

kept for the government, and unofficial records. Edgar Feige, an economist at the University of Wisconsin, estimates that each year income amounting to some 550 billion dollars goes unreported. That equals more than a fourth of the reported gross national product. To put it another way, over a hundred billion dollars in tax revenue is lost every year.

What interests us here, though, is not so much statistics on the economy as the psychological and moral aspect of the problem. Everyone who attempts to shirk paying some of his taxes inevitably places himself in conflict with the law. Sometimes the conflict is overt, visible on the surface, but more often than not no one but an experienced specialist representing the financial interests of the government can uncover it.

Such expertise exists, in principle, in the Internal Revenue Service. The machinery of the IRS is massive and powerful. In the force it exerts on Americans, it can be compared only with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). And in fact the IRS is equipped with the same kind of up-to-the-minute tools for investigation and surveillance that the American secret police uses. The difference is that while the FBI's task is to combat crime and unorthodox thinking, the IRS keeps tabs on all Americans who make or receive money in any way. The tax investigators operate according to all the standards of police work, using not only financial and legal experts but also detectives, electronic equipment, infra-red photography, and so on.

Americans go through agony when the time to pay taxes rolls around each year. "That terrible taxing time," the *Reader's Digest* calls it, noting that "to many Americans, preparing a tax return is a tossup between panic and procrastination... It's tax trauma time again, when millions of procrastinating taxpayers face the forms of April. Tax preparation involves a bigger burden than merely collecting records, computing what is owed and paying the Internal Revenue Service — it involves a struggle with their psyches that many people find fearful, indeed almost unbearable."

Victor C. Becker, a Washington tax consultant, says: "They all panic when it gets near April 15. My telephone doesn't stop ringing after April I. People don't know what they are afraid of." Why do so many Americans put off paying their taxes until the last minute? Are they reluctant to part with their money? Of course. But there is another reason too — the perennial hope that in the torrent of forms that

inundates the IRS around April 15 the tax men will find it harder to spot anything wrong. But alas, the returns are scrutinized nonetheless, and the IRS makes detailed audits on something like two million of them. Americans think of receiving notice of an upcoming tax audit as something akin to getting a heart attack by mail. Some audits are done at random, as routine spot checks, others because there is suspicion that income has been concealed. The suspicions are often founded on information given by other citizens. Here again we must not jump to conclusions: don't think that America is a nation of talebearers and informers. No, it is just that if such information is confirmed the person who supplied it gets a reward of money from the IRS. Neat and simple as you please!

Reader's Digest, the American's preceptor and guardian, does not abandon him in his trouble. "The best attitude to adopt for the audit," it advises, "is 'neutral.' Be calm and cooperative. In general, it's not a good idea to be too talkative. Keep in mind that you do not have to volunteer any information."

The IRS always outstrips the other federal agencies in the number of criminal cases it instigates. The punishment for tax evasion is usually severe — several years in prison. And incidentally, tax evasion is one of the most frequently brought charges in American legal practice.

And still the fantastic chess match goes endlessly on. At one side of the board sits all America. At the other, the employees of the IRS, numbering some tens of thousands. An American who loses often lands behind bars. Each time it punishes an offender, the IRS is, as it were, warning the rest: Don't cheat the government — no good will come of it. But Americans go right on playing their game, and the officials playing theirs. It seems the temptation to beat the system is so great, and the aversion to giving up hard-earned money so strong, that people are willing to risk the penalties facing them if they lose in this all-American sport.

This peculiar confrontation is one of the most remarkable features of the American way of life. It leaves a deep, indelible mark on Americans — one that I find most surprising. Out of the unceasing duel with the tax man a distinctive attitude has emerged. Society does not condemn a person found guilty of tax evasion. Instead, it treats him like a chess-player who has lost his match.

What does it mean, though, to hide part of one's income so as to evade taxes legally imposed? It means to cheat the

government. But as I have said, this crime, if discovered, does not disgrace the culprit. It should be noted at once that public opinion in the USA does not regard every sort of crime with such indifference. But cheating the government — that's different. If you can manage it, good for you. If you get caught, too bad, but there's no disgrace. And this attitude is not confined to the relationship between citizens and the IRS.

A significant example. The details of the Watergate affair, as a result of which President Nixon was forced to resign, are well known. Nixon and his closest associates grossly violated America's laws for their own interest during the election campaign. The law metes out punishment for this, but people do not condemn it. They only sigh now and again: "If you can't pull it off, don't try it." This sentiment is tenacious and widespread, as can be seen in the unabashed, not to say defiant, behavior of Americans who are caught trying to play tricks on the government. At the height of the Watergate investigation I watched a special Senate committee questioning accused wrong-doers. There the scoundrels sat, surrounded by their lawyers, wives, and even children (such is the tradition). They faced the Senators on the committee proudly, as if they had been summoned not in disgrace but to be given awards.

So we see that Americans' ideas of honor and shame, thievery and deceit, are not at all identical with our own. Even though it might seem that such ideas are common to all, and would mean the same thing to all normal people in any society with even the rudiments of civilization. But no! The American context transforms them almost beyond recognition. In that same context an American believes, and not without sound and weighty reasons, that the rich will not suffer greatly if someone a good deal poorer appropriates part of their wealth. How? By stealing it! *U.S. News and World Report* tells us that various kinds of business crime — employee pilfering, check forging, credit-card fraud, and the like — inflict losses of as much as forty-four billion dollars on American business every year. It is clear from that figure that we are dealing with a mass phenomenon, and must ask about its social, moral, and psychological significance. *U.S. News and World Report* attempts its own analysis of the situation. After citing many figures, the author of the unsigned article addresses himself to the question that interests us: Why do so many Americans steal? First of all, it seems, because the

whole American economy is in deep trouble. Second, the magazine says, much of the blame goes to American advertising, which "has become extremely sophisticated in creating new desires. The result is a growing number of Americans who never feel they have enough and are willing to steal to get the things they want."

A curious explanation, this, but it cannot even compare to the article's next paragraph:

"Schools and churches, too, are described as putting more stress on the democratic ideals of equality and self-advancement, instead of encouraging people to be happy with what society hands them."

This is straight from the heart — a cry of vexation at the dishonesty and ingratitude of employees. The points that follow are more rational:

"Those who steal don't see themselves as thieves — they're oppressed people or adventurers who are trying to outwit an unfair system... People who wouldn't think of stealing from a person they know sometimes express little guilt about ripping off a large company where the ultimate victims are hidden."

The article's concluding observation is eminently logical: "The cynical attitudes that foster such crimes are described as spreading in the wake of recent disclosures of corporate wrongdoing... Ripping off the system is thought to be excusable in some segments of society, because corporations are perceived to be ripping off the public anyway."

And so we come full circle. Nothing remains but to sound the alert: "The epidemic of inside thievery is creating an immediate threat to the survival of our economic system." What to do, then? The advice offered is to the point, but hardly comforting: "The best way to prevent more Americans from deciding that it's stupid to be honest is to put more crooks in jails."

What sort of person is the business criminal, anyway? Here is how Professor W. Steve Albrecht, an expert on employee crime, answers that question: "In most respects the white-collar criminal is very much like you and me. He's older than the typical property offender. He's more likely to be married, less likely to be divorced; less likely to have used drugs or alcohol; more likely to be an active church member; weighs more than average; has more children; has a more stable family life; scores higher on psychological tests of self-esteem, self-sufficiency, achievement." In fact the business

criminal, in this composite portrait, "turns out to be someone just like the normal citizen who's placed in a situation where he has a great opportunity to steal and is under high situational pressure...

"A much higher percentage of white-collar criminals are women... as more women move into management-type positions or into jobs that present the opportunity for theft, the total of women offenders will rise."

The statisticians have calculated that store owners lose some two billion dollars each year due to shoplifting. The absolute majority of the offenders are perfectly ordinary citizens with no connections to the criminal world.

But these days simple shoplifting is beginning to seem a bit primitive, outdated. Meanwhile electronic robbery is growing more widespread as computer specialists make hauls through technical manipulations. In fact, this is how the largest bank robbery in American history to date was pulled off. Stanley Mark Rifkin, while servicing computers for Security Pacific National Bank in Los Angeles, cracked the codes controlling the bank's electronic system. He then arranged for the computer to transfer ten million dollars to his account. Security Pacific handles some fifteen hundred transactions, involving something like four billion dollars, each day; it is understandable, then, that ten million might go unnoticed in the shuffle. Rifkin was finally found out only because he began speculating in diamonds with the money he had embezzled.

In another case, a computer programmer at a Minneapolis bank slipped in a command that made it possible for him to withdraw money at will. He went unapprehended until the machine broke down and the bank's financial operations had to be temporarily handed over to human bookkeepers. They spotted the electronic thief straightaway.

There have also been instances of the owners of "smart machines" putting them to dishonest uses. The heads of an insurance company in Los Angeles, adapting the immortal idea of Gogol's Chichikov to the modern day, entered tens of thousands of "dead souls" into the memory of their bank's computer to inflate their assets.

There are truly no bounds to the ingenuity Americans display in the search for ways to make money. A few years back a man by the name of Cooper hijacked a passenger plane and demanded that the airlines pay two hundred thousand dollars in ransom. The plane landed according to his in-

structions, then took to the air again after the ransom money had been brought aboard, along with several parachutes. After dropping two test parachutes to make sure they were in working order, Cooper jumped himself. The police were unable to find him. Sensationall Cooper became almost a national hero. The American public was thrilled — and envious. No one gave a thought to the endangered lives of the passengers.

Not long after that another American, Richard McCoy, followed Cooper's example. This time, however, the ransom was half a million. But McCoy got caught. To everyone's amazement, the police discovered that he was a small-town schoolteacher, known as a quiet family man and regular churchgoer. There were a number of similar cases thereafter, but all the air pirates were foiled, and the rash of hijackings subsided quickly. The Americans are, after all, a practical people.

It remains to be mentioned that Richard McCoy had served two tours of duty in Vietnam and earned several medals there. And since the subject of Vietnam has come up, this seems a suitable place to recall how a number of senior American pilots being held as prisoners of war in Hanoi agreed to form a corporation to handle the profits they would make on their books, speeches, and other public appearances after their return home. The minds of these Americans, even in their ignominious captivity, were occupied with business, making money. In any situation, even in prison, it is indispensable to them, like breathing. The Pentagon reacted favorably to the men's idea, commenting that in spite of everything they had kept their feet firmly on the ground.

It should be clear by now what "keeping your feet firmly on the ground" means from the standpoint of American morality. In many other countries, including our own, the same notion has another meaning altogether. Once again we see how differently words and expressions that seem to be the same are interpreted under different social conditions. These words do not come from the vocabulary of politics, either. The ideas behind them, it might be thought, are common to all humanity.

During the USA's aggressive war in Vietnam, American specialists established that if the war was to be waged to advantage fifty Vietnamese would have to die for every American killed. No challenge is too big. In fact, the specialists' figure was even surpassed. There were other calculations being made too, and they were not hidden from the public eye. Why should they

be? After all, business is business. According to the Pentagon's bookkeepers, the means expended in Vietnam were so immense that every Vietnamese killed cost America ten thousand dollars. This figure was published and explicated by the *Washington Post*. Each bullet, it turns out, cost five cents, and on the average 100,000 bullets were fired for every Vietnamese killed. That makes five thousand dollars. Rockets, mines, bombs, and shells had to be taken into account too. Then there was the soldiers' and officers' pay. It all worked out to ten thousand dollars for every victim of America's aggressive war.

This brings us to another side of the same problem: What about the profits that arms manufacturers made on the war in Vietnam? What about the profits they are making on the arms race as a whole? And, most important for us here: What is the effect of this on the moral climate of American society and the psychology of the average citizen?

Where does the taxpayers' money go? Mainly into the coffers of corporations engaged in war business. They work for the Pentagon, which funnels tax dollars to them.

* * *

The search for a new way to make money is something every American has in his blood. I learned about one of those ways from the story of William Goldstein. He was a New Yorker, unemployed. His life had never been an easy one; he had climbed no higher on the ladder of advancement than a job as a security guard. Still, it was work of some kind. Goldstein managed to make ends meet, and no misfortunes befell him, although they might well befall a security guard in restless New York.

Left jobless, Goldstein suddenly found himself in a situation where he could prove his worth and be of use to society. He was at home when a fire broke out in a neighboring apartment. For some unexplained reason the flames spread with unusual speed. Even the firemen who arrived on the scene were daunted. Seizing the nozzle of one of the hoses, Goldstein advanced unhesitatingly towards the flames, directing a stream of water into them. His example buoyed up the others, and soon the fire had been extinguished. The former security guard stayed right to the end, battling the conflagration like a seasoned fireman. But when he left the building afterwards he was suddenly overcome with smoke inhalation. An ambulance

carried him to the Bronx Municipal Hospital, and a few hours later our hero was back home again.

Goldstein received heartfelt thanks from his neighbors and the building superintendant, and a bill for two hundred dollars from the hospital. Where is someone without a job supposed to come by two hundred dollars, though? Despite the gratitude of Goldstein's neighbors, it dit not occur to them to collect the sum for him. He received a court summons. The hospital was demanding payment for the first aid he had received. In a letter submitted to the court, the building superintendant described Goldstein's bravery and asked that he not be held liable for the charges. Refusing to take this appeal into consideration, the court handled the case according to the letter of the law. Goldstein was crushed. He found it unbelievable that his action should cost him two hundred dollars. In the end, however, he was forced to believe it.

A few days after this story came to my notice in New York my work took me to California, where I had occasion to think of Goldstein again. During my stay in Los Angeles a fire broke out on the city's outskirts. The weather was extremely dry and windy. There had been no rain for a long time. The ground itself seemed to have caught fire. Flames raced through grass and shrubs. Two hundred homes had to be evacuated. This was the third such fire to break out in the past three days.

Fires.... Hearing about them in both New York and Los Angeles forced me to stop and think. I remembered that on earlier visits to the USA I had also seen fires and firemen quite often. Then I came across an article in *Time* magazine that unexpectedly tied in the Goldstein story with my musings on fires in America. I read that in ghetto areas like the Bronx (where misfortune befell Goldstein) landlords often see arson as an advantageous way of liquidating their "low-paying" properties.

The same issue of *Time* reported that in Boston twenty-three persons had been arrested for arson. Among them were six attorneys, eleven real-estate agents, four insurance inspectors, a police officer, and a retired fire chief. It had been discovered that they were conspiring with landlords who expected to receive insurance benefits as a result of fires.

From Los Angeles I went to San Francisco, which I learned is the arson capital of the USA. The number of fires in the city had increased no less than sevenfold over the five preceding years. Arsonists are keeping up with the times:

they now use sophisticated chemical mixtures that make it nearly impossible to establish the cause of the fire.

Did our luckless hero know about all this as he hurried towards the blaze?

* * *

Another widespread characteristic of the American social climate, and one we outside observers know next to nothing about, is living on credit. Its leading principle is, at first glance, extremely simple: "Buy now, pay later." Relatively speaking, the system of consumer credit is a recent development. Nonetheless it has attained gigantic dimensions, involving an overwhelming number of Americans. What are we to make of this? Perhaps living on credit makes things easier and more enjoyable for these people, frees them needless cares? Let us have a closer look.

First of all, what does living on credit mean? It means that the great majority of Americans is constantly in debt to banks. Different nations have any number of proverbs and sayings about the unenviable lot of the debtor. Many of America's first settlers were fleeing debts and debtors' prisons in Europe. For several generations after, their descendants in the USA feared debt as they feared the devil himself. Those who extracted gain from the lending of money were despised. "Usurer" was a term of abuse.

Today all that has changed. Living on credit has caught all America in the usurers' grip. At present Americans owe something like one trillion dollars at interest to moneylenders of various stripes — an average of $4,650 for every man, woman, and child. Here is a partial breakdown of the trillion owed: $550 billion for housing and land; $210 billion for automobiles, appliances, furniture, household goods, and food; and $200 billion for health care — that is, for doctors and hospitals.

Is this, perhaps, a convenience, a way of paying for things in easy installments? Hardly. After all, America's modern usurers lend their money at interest and reap immense profits. A $100,000 single-family house, for instance, costs $316,000 when payments are spread over thirty years with annual interest of ten percent. A car will cost $6,240 instead of $5,000 when paid for over three years at fifteen percent. In fact, the interest Americans must pay increases their cost of living by almost a third.

People living on credit must make payments regularly. But

what if the unforeseen occurs, if the family's breadwinner suffers an extended illness, or loses his job, or has to take a cut in pay? The creditors will not be kept waiting. The unfortunate borrower will lose the money he has paid so far, and also whatever he has bought on credit. More than twenty million Americans are regularly in arrears or fail altogether to make payments on what they owe.

This number grows markedly in time of recession. The moral trauma suffered by these millions of insolvent debtors can only be imagined. Could anyone calculate how much mental and other anguish results? It must also be noted that in personal bankruptcies the tragedy is played out swiftly and pitilessly. If the debtor is late by as little as ten days, the lender has a legal right to attach his property — his house, land, automobile, household appliances, etc. Alternatively, the modern-day Shylock may add a penalty of five percent to the debt and then charge interest on the interest.

In addition to all this, the cost of living is increasing by leaps and bounds. Ten years ago an average single-family house cost $25,000. In the era of Reaganomics, it has come to cost $70,000. *Time* reports that eighty-five percent of American families cannot afford the monthly mortgage payments on a $60,000 house.

As if to relieve Americans from tiresome calculations, money-lenders have invented "plastic money"— the credit card. The holder of such a card need no longer pay for his purchases in cash. The money can be withdrawn from his personal bank account later on and transferred to the seller. Today it would be difficult to think of anything in the sphere of goods and services that an American cannot buy with his credit card — from a car to gasoline, from dinner in a restaurant to a night with a call-girl. Credit cards are convenient. They are also part of the total system of consumer credit, and as such they naturally obey the prime rule of that system — they increase the cost of goods and services.

There is another side to this cunning system as well, one that grates painfully against human sensibilities: When a purchase is made with a credit card, how much, to what limit, can the seller trust the buyer? Clearly he needs to have some idea of his customer's ability to pay. To spare those who extend credit unnecessary worry and embarrassment, more than 2,500 credit bureaus have been set up in all parts of the country. These peculiar institutions know literally everything about individuals on file: their place of employment, salary,

job seniority, political views, state of health, character, personal preferences, habits, etc. We spoke earlier of the IRS's prying into the lives of Americans. The credit bureaus do exactly the same thing. Furthermore, it is not only the American's finances that are scrutinized but his whole biography: his personal life, politics, and involvement in public affairs.

Thus confidential information is continually being gathered on almost the entire adult population of the USA. We see the networks of criminal investigation and police surveillance (made more ominous by the existence of a powerful secret police force, the FBI) being stretched from one end of the country to the other. Such are the perils that lie in wait for the American farther down the path that winds so whimsically through the thickets of finance. It may begin with speculating in soap as a child, or raising chickens for market. Who knows where it may eventually end?

The Nation and Nationalities

In the United States anyone whose family has lived in the country for four generations or so will think of himself as a "real American." Nonetheless, the spiritual bond between such people and the country from which their great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers came to the USA still remains. The "real Americans" I have met always told me right away where their ancestors came from — England, Ireland, France, Norway, etc. These roots are still living. Most Americans, however, as a result of the great waves of immigrants that came to the USA from many different lands, have an exotic mixture of bloodlines. And the brew has not settled down yet; it is still fermenting. Indeed, Americans themselves note that while earlier their country was seen as a melting-pot where many nations coalesced into one, American nation, the situation today is changing. In recent years various ethnic groups have been insisting more vigorously on their right to national identity. This is particularly true of blacks and Hispanics, but other, smaller ethnic groups are also holding more tenaciously to traditions that tie them to the "old country." Thus today it is especially evident that America's face is in fact a mosaic. At least ninety-two ethnic groups can be found in New York City, for example.

As yet there is no American nation, as there is — let us say — no American language. And yet it is clear that the

USA's white inhabitants form a special, privileged group. As a result, the absorbtion of other ethnic groups proceeds slowly, and the time when the American nation will take definitive shape recedes into the indefinite future.

There are some fifty million non-white Americans living in the USA: Negroes, Chicanos (Americans of Mexican ancestry), Puerto Ricans, Indians (the original inhabitants of the continent), and other national minorities. The unhappy fate suffered by so many of them has left a visible mark on the entire life of the country, and today their unequal position is apparent at every turn. It is especially striking when you find yourself in the black, Puerto Rican, and Mexican ghettos of American cities or visit the Indian reservations.

The majority of the USA's Indians, who today number no more than 800,000, is doomed to a wretched existence on reservations where unemployment averages nine times higher than in the country as a whole. The average income of Indian families is only one fourth the national average. The people who lived first in the boundless expanses of the North American continent are literally being reduced to nothing.

Further evidence of how deeply racial prejudice has taken root in America is the plight of the more than twenty-five million American Negroes. In the USA, bigotry lurks under every imaginable guise. Astonishingly persistent, it is — for the time being — ineradicable.

One of the classics of American cinema is a film with the unusual title *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*. The leading roles are played by the great American actors Spencer Tracy and Katharine Hepburn, who may well be the brightest and most enduring pair in the history of American film. In *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* they portray a middle-aged white couple with very liberal views on national problems, who think of themselves as completely free of racial prejudice. They have a young and charming daughter, who unexpectedly gives notice that she is bringing her fiancé to have dinner with the family. Curiosity gives way to shock when she ushers into the dining-room the man she has chosen to be her husband — a Negro! All her parents' liberalism drops away in an instant. They are stunned, incensed. The virus of racism that had lain dormant in their blood bursts into virulent life.

"Would you let your daughter marry a black man?" That is a question I have been asked by more than a few Americans. They were not Ku Klux Klan members, either, or uneducated

people, but Americans of the most cultivated sort who held very liberal opinions on all other questions. I have spent many days with American families. If they were white, I never saw them with blacks. It was the same with black families: no white visitors appeared. During working hours black and white talk to one another and seem to get along perfectly well. But at quitting time they go their separate ways.

Of course the black people of America have achieved a measure of success in the relentless struggle for their rights. They are not alone in the fight. They have the support of many progressively minded white Americans, and international solidarity is also a great aid to the black people's movement. The United States government cannot ignore the worldwide national liberation movement or the newly independent countries whose populations are overwhelmingly black. Despite certain gains, however, cold hard facts show that glaring inequalities between black and white exist to this day. And the picture is the same for other minorities.

Non-whites account for three out of every four inmates in American prisons, and for fifty-five percent of those put to death at the orders of US courts since 1930. In the state of Maryland, just a stone's throw from Washington, fifty-five of the fifty convicted rapists who have been sentenced to death were black men. In every case the victim was a white woman. But although this crime is committed ten times more frequently against black than white women, never in the history of Maryland has a death sentence been carried out for rape when the victim was black. You might think these figures could produce only one reaction: indignation. But no; racists find support in them for their talk about the criminal inclinations of Negroes and other non-whites.

Statistics show that in every area of life America's national minorities continue to occupy the most unenviable and oppressed position. Under the Reagan administration the numbers of the unemployed in the USA have surpassed ten million, and unemployment among blacks is twice as high as among whites. In industry the percentage of blacks employed decreases as levels of qualification and wages rise. Blacks account for only three percent of all managers, only six percent of skilled workers. Here racists find supplementary ammunition for their argument that blacks are intellectually inferior.

This omnipresent racism inevitably has its effect on American blacks. Sometimes the reaction is explosive, and protest

takes extreme forms. Everything I have seen of *this side* of life in the USA leads me to believe that most *blacks* feel painfully self-conscious when they are among whites. They are constantly on guard for a slight, never relaxing for a moment. It is not an easy state to endure. Sometimes the tension finds outlet in intentional rudeness and needless arrogance, and once again the racists can claim that blacks are psychologically defective and unstable.

And so link by link racial prejudices are joined into an invisible suit of armor that many Americans wear under their evening clothes or overalls.

America has not yet done away with the most extreme manifestation of racism — the Ku Klux Klan. On the contrary, a resurgence of Klan terrorism has been reported in recent years. The "philosophy" of Klan members begins and ends with blind hatred of blacks. Here is a conversation with an active Klansman:

"Haven't you ever liked even a single black person?"

"No. I can't remember even one."

"How can it be possibly that in your whole life you have never met one black that you felt kindly towards?"

"But I haven't, honestly."

"Why do you take such an attitude?"

"Because they are inferior. I have always thought so. To tell the truth, I wouldn't even want to be in the same room with one of them."

"How do you picture an ideal society?"

"That would be a society without any blacks at all."

Hypocritical talk about how the conflict between blacks and whites has lost its edge has become fashionable in the USA in the past few years. The outburst of just and long-contained rage that shook Miami in 1980 put an end to such prattle. Once again, as so many times before, racism reared its ugly head. White policemen beat a black man to death for no reason whatever. Their crime was so blatant that four of the killers had to be put on trial. But the all-white jury found the policemen innocent. At this the blacks of Miami rose in protest. For three days the city burned with the flames of civil war. In the end there were twenty killed and six hundred injured.

The "long hot summer" of 1967, when many American cities were embroiled as blacks battled against racism, unavoidably came to mind. Again it was remembered that the members of this fire are smoldering constantly, that they are

sure to blaze up again and again as long as black Americans continue to be second-class citizens. There were outbreaks of violence in Chicago in 1919, in Harlem in 1933 and 1943, in Watts in 1965. There were street actions in protest against the murder of black leader Martin Luther King in 1968. And in 1980, racists made an attempt on the life of one of the men who is continuing King's work — Vernon Jordan, president of the National Urban League, which ranks among the largest black organizations.

As noted earlier, blacks are far from being the only national minority in the USA who are treated as step-children by their own country. Specialists consider Chicanos — Americans of Mexican ancestry — the USA's most discriminated-against minority group. More than half of America's 11.3 million Spanish-speaking citizens are Chicanos. Most of them live in California, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado, with the largest number in Texas. Migrant farm work and collecting garbage in the cities is the lot of Chicanos. They suffer the same sort of discrimination in education as in labor. National authorities are apparently indifferent to Chicanos' hopeless poverty and the curtailment of their rights. What is more, local police forces often systematically terrorize Chicanos to keep the cheap labor force in harness.

The USA's two million Puerto Ricans are among the pariahs of American society. According to official estimates nearly a third of them earn so little that they live in extreme poverty, and unemployment among them is significantly higher than among any of the USA's other ethnic groups. In the country as a whole, unemployment among women averages 6.6 percent; for Puerto Rican women the figure is 17.6 percent.

These are the facts. This is the reality of American life. In speaking of such matters, the existence of anti-Semitism in the United States cannot be ignored. To one degree or another it is found in a great many social strata. It makes itself clearly felt in the army, for instance, which is of course not one of the USA's most progressive organizations. This observation comes not only from my conversations with servicemen but also from works of fiction about the modern American army. The National-Socialist Liberation Front, which declares its purpose is fighting to the end for the liberation of America from the Jews, is allowed to exist in the USA. But anti-Semitism is not confined to neo-Nazi reactionaries. In New York, to cite one example, a third of the organizations that build apartment houses will not accept Jewish tenants. There

are some seven hundred business clubs in the USA that do not admit Jews.

Here I am reminded of a plane trip I once made from San Francisco to New York. It takes five hours to cross the continent from west to east, and to avoid wasting a day I decided on a night plane. There was only one other passenger in the first-class cabin: a man who could be described as a hundred-percent American if anyone could. As a matter of fact I would venture to call him a hundred-and-one-percent American, so closely did he resemble the image of a successful citizen that is American advertising's gift to the world. He was past fifty, but seemed to be still in vigorous health. He was tall and slim, gray-haired but perfectly barbered. His pleasing face was lightly tanned, and to complete the picture he wore an excellently cut suit of the kind that says as much about its owner as a brand-new Cadillac.

"Hello there," he said. "My name is John." (It is traditional in America for new acquaintances to address each other by their first names right away.)

"Vladimir," I replied, and shook the hand he offered.

He promptly handed me a business card, and I in turn gave him one of mine. I glanced at his card for an instant, noting that his name was in fact John, and slipped it into my breast pocket. My own card, however, was studied attentively, and my companion asked a series of questions about my work, my position, and so on. In the further course of our conversation I naturally asked what he did. He said he was in business, and I took him to be a typical representative of the profession. America has thousands and thousands of businessmen. John informed me that he had only been in San Francisco for a few hours. He was making an inspection tour of several of his firm's affiliates; San Francisco had been his fifth stop. He was now bound for New York, where the main office was, and after a mere two or three hours at home would continue on to Houston.

The stewardesses, perhars in distress that there were no other passengers, outdid themselves in looking after us. We were splendidly wined and dined. After all, we were flying in a Boeing 747, which at the time was the largest and most luxurious of all airliners.

Many things can come up in five hours of conversation, but I want to single out one of our exchanges.

"What is the attitude towards anti-Semitism in your country?" John asked.

I answered him truthfully. First of all, I said, anti-Semitism

is considered boorish. In the larger view it is contrary to our ideology and can even be prosecuted under our laws.

"What about Zionism?"

Once again my answer was straightforward. I told John we are against Zionism because it is a form of racism. After several more questions along the same line, he said:

"Tell me, Vladimir, can you express your attitude towards Zionism as openly as this when you are back at home?"

I was astounded.

"You and I have just met, after all. If I express myself openly to you, what reason could there be for me to behave otherwise at home?"

"Of course I believe you, Vladimir. But I had a reason for asking. I know this isn't your first time in America, but let me give you some advice: you shouldn't be so frank here about Zionism. Personally, I think the same as you. But believe me, that kind of talk could get you into trouble here — big trouble. You probably don't realize what a force Zionism is in this country."

We arrived in New York at dawn. John headed home, and I went to my hotel. When I had checked in I remembered John's card. It would be interesting to know what firm he worked for. There are any number of corporations in the US, of course, but I could always look John's up somewhere and find out just what line of work he was in. But there was no need to consult reference books. I looked at his card and gasped. John was one of the captains of American business, the right-hand man (senior vice-president) of a billionaire banker known throughout the world. John's boss was not of Jewish descent, although more often than not in the USA the big money is in the hands of the Jewish bourgeoisie.

Shortly after my return to Moscow I received a letter from John. At the top of the letterhead, modestly printed, was the name of one of the world's largest banks.

John was right. Zionist organizations are enormously influential in the United States today. Moshe Dayan, let us say, comes to Washington. It is not his first visit, but all the same the *Washington Post,* not content with a solemn announcement of the event, prints a full-page picture of him. I showed the grandiose portrait to a Senator I know — an old hand at politics — and asked if he could recall ever having seen such an outsized photograph in a newspaper. He shrugged: No, he couldn't recall anything like it.

"But then why should Dayan be given such an honor?"

"It isn't an honor," the Senator said. "It's money."

"How's that?"

"Very simple. They paid the newspaper for a full page. There's a set price. If you paid the same amount they would print your picture too."

A newspaper advertisement like the one in the *Washington Post* costs a lot of money. The Zionist organizations have money, and for more than just political advertisements. They also fund all kinds of public campaigns, meetings, demonstrations, provocations, and so on. But the power and freedom the Zionists enjoy in the USA has more behind it than their enormous financial resources. Another formidable tool in their hands are the mass media — America's largest newspapers, magazines, and television companies.

The USA's six million Jews make up less than three percent of the population. Most of them are concentrated in populous states such as New York, California, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. No presidential candidate can hope to win without carrying those states, and their Congressmen have a powerful voice in the House of Representatives. The Democratic Party relies on Jewish capital for something like sixty percent of its campaign expenses, and the Republican Party for some forty percent.

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee, to which the principal Zionist organizations belong, coordinates and channels all their activities. Its Congressional lobby exerts intense and unremitting pressure on the United States government. It was the Israeli lobby, as a matter of fact, that first did all it could to provoke and support the aggression in Vietnam and afterwards took the lead among the opponents of détente. A US Senator, who asked that his name not be used, has remarked: "If I oppose them openly, I'm finished. Many Senators are outraged by the way Israel's representatives behave here, but can do nothing. The lobbyists try to force their own point of view concerning Israel onto Congress and refuse to tolerate independent thinking."

All America resounded with the uproar the Zionists made over something General George S. Brown, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said in a talk with students about the flagrant and cynical way Israel's representatives browbeat the American military establishment.

The position Brown occupied was an imposing one, but there is no one in the USA the Zionists would hesitate to take on. The words were scarcely out of the general's mouth, but already all the news media were waging a smear campaign against him, accusing him of anti-Semitism. Brown was summoned forthwith by the President, sharply reprimanded, and forced to retract his careless remarks. It was the end of his career.

Another example. A resolution was placed before the United Nations condemning Israel's policies in the occupied Arab territories, and the USA's representative voted for it. America's Zionist machine immediately swung into operation at full tilt. The newspapers reported that the Israeli ambassador in Washington had demanded a secret meeting with the President so as to prevail on him to change his position concerning the USA's vote. The ambassador quickly achieved this. Appearing before a group of New York municipal employees, Carter repented and said the American representative's vote had been a mistake. The audience was carefully chosen; the New York primary election was coming up in a few days, and the Zionists are particularly strong in the USA's largest city. Even the President of the United States must curry favor with them.

Here we may also recall the fracas that the Zionists created over a meeting between Andrew Young (the US Ambassador to the United Nations) and a Palestinian observer at the UN. Young was swiftly removed from his post to punish him for this "offense." In a word, the Zionists influence not only the USA's politics but also American society as a whole — its outlook, daily life, morals and manners.

The sway that the Zionists exercise in the USA is also due to their close ties with the military-industrial complex. Many of the big corporations that receive orders from the Pentagon are controlled by Zionists. The Lockheed aircraft corporation, for example, is controlled by the Lazarus brothers, who are also among the leaders of the American Jewish Committee. Zionists are also firmly entrenched on the board of directors of General Dynamics, which makes ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, nuclear submarines, and bombers. The underlying class basis for Zionism's ascendancy in the USA is the community of imperialist interests between the Zionist tycoons and America's other monopolists. This is what gives Israel its privileged position as the USA's "fifty-first state." This was once again made abundantly evident by Israel's aggression against Lebanon in 1982, which had the full support of the Reagan administration.

Another important minority group are the Chinese. They

are probably to be found in every city of any size. As a rule they live apart, in "Chinatowns," where quite a few of the exotic features of their far-away homeland are preserved. The Chinese restaurants in such districts are popular; the food is always delicious, and less expensive than in other eating places. Numerous Chinese shops and trading booths, which specialize in exquisite handmade articles, attract many customers, especially tourists. Experts on the USA's criminal world say these same colorful streets are home to a flourishing Chinese Mafia, an organization even more secretive than its "American" counterpart.

Immigrants from China began to arrive in the USA in the middle of the last century, and for a long time they shared all the misfortunes suffered by other national minorities. These days things are different. During the Kennedy and Johnson administrations — that is to say, in the 60s — the government took a number of steps to broaden immigration from China. While officialdom was taking this encouraging attitude, illegal immigration from China increased too. Most of the Chinese who come to the USA have (or claim to have) relatives there. It should be noted that there are some twelve million people in the People's Republic of China who have relatives in other countries, including the USA, where the influx of Chinese immigrants is a factor to be reckoned with.

As attitudes towards the Chinese changed in the USA during the 60s an increasing number of skilled workers and specialists, and also students, began to be drawn from among Chinese immigrants, huaqiao, who began to take a more active part in the life of American society. By 1972 there were more than thirteen thousand firms in the USA belonging to immigrants from China. Their combined profits came to $I.2 billion. They included banks, import-export companies, electronics firms, and enterprises in light industry. Of the more than four hundred companies that belong to the National Council for US-China Trade some one hundred belong to Chinese. Today some 15,000 Chinese-Americans work as highly qualified technical specialists, and some 7,000 as teachers and researchers in universities and colleges. As United States citizens, they also serve in the American army.

A noted American scientist of Chinese ancestry returned to the People's Republic of China from the USA back in 1955. He had held the rank of colonel in the United States Air Force and received military honors for his work in the development of America's nuclear rocketry. Thirty-nine other

Chinese-American scientists went with him, taking with them approximately one ton of scientific and technical documents. A little time passed, he began to be called "the Chinese von Braun" and "the father of the Chinese atomic bomb." During the 50s and 60s many other scientists who had worked in this field returned to the PRC from the USA, among them the winners of a Nobel Prize in physics. The *Far Eastern Economic Review* notes that in one year four hundred American scientists of Chinese origin visited the People's Republic of China.

As Washington tries to play its "China card" against our country, America's Chinese minority finds itself in a highly ambiguous position as a result of the efforts being made by enemies of the USSR in the United States.

Law and Rights

As you get to know America better you are struck by the great numbers of lawyers and law firms it has. They serve not only individual citizens but also organizations of every possible sort. As a rule these lawyers and their firms are prosperous; it is clear they have all the work they can handle. The legal profession, one of the most prestigious in the country, is seen as a sure way to make a handsome living.

Such casual observations are borne out by statistics. America has one lawyer for every five hundred citizens. Is that very many? Yes. France, for example, has one lawyer for every five thousand citizens. It is also worthy of note that lawyers do more than handle Americans' affairs; they govern them too. The last Congress, for instance, had a superabundance of lawyers: sixty-five percent of the Senators and more than half of the Congressmen. And the legislators, it goes without saying, do not forget where they came from. They do everything in their power to maintain the supply of work for their guild. When Congress passed a new law on natural gas prices, for instance, the head of the federal agency that would implement it said he would need another three hundred lawyers to oversee its enforcement. The American press commented, not without reason, that the measure had been adopted more with an eye towards creating new jobs for lawyers than out of concern for the development of the natural gas industry. It would appear the Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court had every justification for warning that "we may well be on our way to a society overrun by hordes of lawyers, hungry as locusts."

The strength of the lawyers' grip on power is best exemplified by Washington, D. C., where their numbers increased from sixteen thousand in 1970 to forty thousand in 1980. Putting it another way, one out of every seventy-five residents of America's capital is a lawyer. The "super-lawyers" of Washington are vastly influential. Some experts maintain that they are intentionally weaving new intricacies into the already tangled network of the laws; others believe that the rapid growth of the legal profession merely reflects the complexity of governing an enormous country.

Of course Washington has its divorces, its civil and criminal cases; but the great majority of the city's lawyers are not concerned with such. They are occupied with the affairs of the federal government. For years on end they move back and forth between their law firms and high government posts or seats in Congress. At first glance this would seem to show an odd lack of business acumen, since their incomes are drastically reduced when they opt for government posts or elective office. Joseph Califano, who was reaping $550,000 a year from his legal practice, nonetheless agreed willingly to take a job in the Carter administration at an annual salary of $66,000. Lloyd Cutler, whose earnings as a practicing lawyer were roughly equal to Califano's, also accepted without hesitation a position on the White House staff that would bring him $400,000 a year less. Their behavior might seem quixotic to an inexperienced observer, but the ways of Washington's old boys are devious, and hasty conclusions must be avoided. The money cast upon the waters of a few years' service in high public office will later return multiplied a hundredfold. Many former government officials and Congressmen are received with open arms as partners in law firms, and this alone increases their incomes several times over. What is it that the lawyers buy and sell in the market of the capital? Connections and influence.

It will be remembered that in the first chapter, in describing the context of life in America, I wrote that people there live in a dense financial jungle, an impenetrable thicket of figures. It is hard not to get lost. What path or track to follow in this case or that? How to avoid an infringement of the laws of the jungle? How to get around one law with the help of another? Legal advice helps resolve questions such as these. And of course such advice is not come by for nothing. So it is that law has become one of America's biggest businesses. Business is supposed to expand with every passing year. And the

law business does expand, constantly gathering strength. Before we examine where this business is headed, and whom it serves, we may note that even the voice of American business, *U. S. News and World Report*, complains: "Lawyers are necessary, and many do good deeds. But enough is enough. Lawyers make the laws, administer the laws and prosecute the laws. If you take a lawyer to court over his fees or professional conduct, you will find a lawyer sitting in judgment. If you try to enact a law that is undesirable to lawyers, the way is barred by organized legal opposition and law-making lawyers."

It could not be said that Americans are naturally inclined to haul every dispute before the courts. But the very environment they live in spawns "hordes of lawyers," which in turn have a noticeable effect on America's morals and everyday life. This is a salient feature in America's national portrait.

U. S. News and World Report says that America has become a "suing society." Patients bring suits against doctors, clients are suing lawyers, consumers are suing manufacturers, and so forth. Even American families have not been spared by what one legal expert has called the "epidemic of hair-trigger suing." There have always been divorce cases, of course, but things have now gone so far that children are suing parents for bringing them up wrong. Each year more than seven million suits are brought, many of which take several years to be decided. The mountains of paper that pile up in America's legal institutions can be imagined.

A university student sued his professor for $853,000. On what grounds? For the mental anguish he suffered when he received what he thought was an unjustifiably low grade.

A convict broke out of prison, was caught, and received an additional sentence for attempted escape. He then brought suit against his guards for allowing him to break out, asking one million dollars for the damage he had suffered.

A young mother sued local authorities for $500,000 when she was forbidden to breast-feed her baby beside a community wading pool.

Two football fans turned to the courts when their favorite team suffered what seemed to them an unjust defeat.

A twenty-four-year-old man asked for $350,000 in compensation from his parents for the way they had raised him, which he said would make it hard for him to get along in life.

A man brought suit against a woman acquaintance after she failed to appear for a date. He wanted the court to make her pay his travel expenses for the date — thirty-eight dollars.

And so on and on.

"Such cases may strike many people as amusing," writes *U. S. News and World Report.* "But they are symptomatic of a fundamental shift in the American way of life — a shift many legal and social experts consider to be unhealthy. As America becomes a suing society, the cost of everything is driven up, trust between individuals is undermined".

Suits for malpractice brought against doctors by their patients are particularly numerous. Cases of this sort now constitute one of the most important branches of American law. The sums involved are often large, and this naturally attracts both claimants and lawyers. Doctors and medical institutions insure themselves heavily against the unforeseen expenses that can result from malpractice suits, and this in turn raises the cost of treatment still more.

Lawyers themselves are frequently charged with malpractice and other offenses. Each year an average of one tenth of America's half a million or so lawyers come before the courts as defendants. And lawyers are often among the most malicious transgressors against the law. The notorious Watergate break-in was organized by two lawyers: John Mitchell, who was then Attorney General of the United States, and John Dean, Counsel to President Nixon. Both ended up behind bars, but their sentences were light and the conditions in which they served them most comfortable — which shows once again that in America justice weighs the offenses of different people in different scales. It is indeed hard to think what scales should be used when the offender is the Attorney General. In the end, however, he was found guilty and sentenced to prison— even if not for long. But what a prison it turned out to be! Mitchell lived there in a separate air-conditioned cottage and ordered his own menu each day. He played golf and tennis, went fishing, took in movies, and spent long hours in front of the television.

Suits against teachers make up another chapter in American jurisprudence. Here once again we find that the plaintiffs are interested not so much in justice as in monetary compensation. For what? For the careless attitude the teacher has taken towards his duty. If a pupil is hurt during a physical education class, for instance, the teacher and the school may be held liable. "I worry all the time now about being sued, and it has affected my work," a high-school teacher complained. "The close relationship between teacher and student is fading. I wouldn't think of touching a student now under any circumstances. And I think twice before arranging a special program or outing for the kids, because someone may get hurt and sue me."

Churches, synagogues, and various religious organizations are also resorting more and more often to the courts to settle conflicts and disagreements among themselves. Friends and neighbors bring suits against one another too. Meanwhile new laws and amendments to old ones seem to encourage all this. The California Supreme Court ruled that if one guest injures another during a party, not only the guest guilty of disorderly conduct but also the host can be held legally responsible. Thus, at a single stroke of the judicial pen, the number of possible defendants was doubled. This means more work for lawyers and hence more fees. The sums that may be awarded in compensation were also increased by the decision.

The American press blames all this on the lawyers. Here is a different opinion, though, from an Indiana lawyer named C. W. Edwards: "The nation has gone mad and is chopping down its own house; and you criticize the axes it uses rather than treat the illness. Isn't it convenient to have lawyers to blame for society's defects?"

But might it not be that this system, despite its costliness, nonetheless has its justification? What I consider a sensible answer to that question has been given by Philip W. Leber, a Vermont law student: "The U. S. has the dubious distinction of having more lawyers per capita because we have more freedom, more laws, more rights... The legal system reflects the moral worth of a society. The better the society, the less law (and lawyers!) there will be. The worse the society, the more law there will be."

The efficiency of American business has long been proverbial, but it seems this image may now be going out of date as the shackles of legal bureaucracy become a regular feature of life. The owner of a middle-sized filling station reports that he spends six hundred and ten hours a year completing different forms for the federal, state, and county governments. He points out this does not include the hours he spends on tax forms and other paperwork necessary to the operation of his business. This is the burden of a small businessman. General Motors, a giant corporation, has over twenty thousand employees who work solely on government regulations. In New York state, to cite another example, one medical bill in four results from the multitudinous demands of one hundred and sixty-four distinct agencies. To keep up with the endless flow of new

regulations he must obey, a businessman must study some seventy thousand pages of official federal documentation each year. Someone has taken the trouble to calculate that in a single year twenty-six thousand bills were placed before Congress. And there are the state legislatures too, whose members do not sit idle!

In a word, the USA has more than its share of laws, legislators, and lawyers. And now comes the time to ask: What benefit does the average American derive from all this?

The answer of the specialists is that three fourths of the Americans who need legal advice do not get it. And in general the interpretation given in the USA to concepts such as rights and liberty is most peculiar. In *Call to Action*, written by Ronald Reagan, we read: "Liberty and property have always been connected in the minds of Americans. The US Supreme Court reaffirmed in 1972 that "a fundamental interdependence exists between the personal right to liberty and the personal right to property. Neither could have meaning without the other.'"

And this is how it works out: in the USA, the one with the most liberty is the one who has the most property. The down-to-earth philosophy behind this was well put by a San Francisco society lady: "The Reagans are setting a lifestyle so different from the hide-it-under-a-bushel attitude of the Carters. The feeling now is that if you have it, why not enjoy it? There is almost a sense of desperation, that if you don't do it now, you won't have the chance again."

Who do America's hordes of lawyers work for, then? The answer is simple: business. The legal force is overwhelmingly concentrated on serving an infinitesimal part of the population — the part that holds most of the country's wealth in its hands. The giant corporations account for only 0.25 percent of the USA's industrial enterprises, but they make 70 percent of the profits and their sales total 65 percent of America's production volume. These figures are the key to understanding the legal situation in the USA.

Several aspects of the inequalities among the USA's various national groups were discussed in the previous section; further examples can be drawn from our present theme. For example, there are one hundred and thirty-five thousand Indians living in the states of Arizona and New Mexico, but not a single Indian lawyer. California has one white lawyer for every 450 white residents, one black lawyer for every 3,000 black residents, and one Chicano lawyer for every 16,000 residents of

Mexican descent. The makeup of the punitive arm of the law is also worthy of note. In 1980 the FBI employed 7,800 persons at its headquarters, including 209 blacks, 215 Hispanics, 21 Indians, and 43 Asians. This in a country where the non-white population numbered some fifty million!

Examples were cited earlier of the different attitude American justice takes towards white and black citizens. While the former make up the absolute majority of the population, the latter are the majority among prison inmates. Indeed, the goddess with the scales and sword is very capricious and selective in America. She plays a major role in repressing the country's progressive forces too — an end to which all means are considered good. We may recall the trumped-up proceedings against Angela Davis, the noted civil-rights activist; against the black poetess Assata Shakur; and against the Wilmington Ten, a group of civil-rights activists headed by the clergyman Benjamin Chavis. The list could be extended indefinitely.

At this point we may turn to the case of Patty Hearst. For a year and a half, the heiress to a fortune of many millions belonged to a band of ultra-left extremists, living with them underground to elude police. By the time the band was at last apprehended, Patty had committed more than enough crimes to send her to prison for the rest of her life. At present some of her confederates have left for a better world, shot by policemen; the others are behind bars. Patty, though, is living on a luxurious estate to which she returned after spending a little while in prison. Clemency, they call it. American newspapers are fond of eyecatching headlines and comparisons. On this occasion they wrote: "Patty becomes a prisoner of luxury." Not a bad prison!

In the morning she emerges from the house and heads for her beautician's salon. But this prosaic journey resembles nothing so much as a royal procession. Patty is accompanied by twenty bodyguards. (The omniscient newspapers report that her parents pay more than $200,000 a year for this escort.) The men use walkie-talkies and are armed with pistols, rifles, and submachine guns. There is plenty of work for them: Patty eats in restaurants, goes to parties at friends', and attends classes at the university where she studies art. She spends a lot of time outdoors playing with her pedigreed German shepherd. She also goes horseback riding and likes to roam around in the hills.

For this free-and-easy life she can thank her father's money and America's best (and naturally most expensive) lawyers. They were the ones who made it possible for Patty to be the

queen of a remarkable ball. Janey Jimenez, a policewoman who was Patty's personal guard throughout the eight weeks of her trial, later brought out a book about her experience — *My Prisoner*. Jimenez arranged a reception in honor of the occasion. Several people involved in the trial attended — including Patty herself. Oscar McGregor, one of the jurors, recalls about that evening: "It was a complete surprise. A shock. I didn't know what to do, how to handle the situation. But I kept to my side of the room. She looked quite at home but I didn't know she was coming. What was I supposed to do? It was embarrassing. She didn't indicate if she recognized me or not. I asked Janey what was going on, and she smiled and explained: "You are my friend. Patty's my friend. That's why you're here.'"

So despite the abundance of laws and lawyers in the USA the triumph of justice there is still a long way off. This is evident not only from American law but also from the status of the most elementary rights. This side of American life is fairly well known, and will be considered here only briefly.

The USA's standing army of unemployed numbers several millions. This is an irrefutable and depressing fact. Yes, there are temporary benefits paid to the unemployed. And none of those who have lost their jobs has died of hunger. America is the richest country in the capitalist world, and can afford the luxury of paying a pittance that demeans the recipient. But even so, it is worth thinking about what happens to someone who is afraid of losing his job, or has already lost it. I have discussed this with a good many Americans, both employed and unemployed. I found no differences of opinion, unemployment is worse than any sickness.

This ineradicable virus of unemployment deeply affects the moral climate of American society, adding a further inhumanity to the social inequalities observable everywhere. All working people suffer a sense of insecurity, a fear of the future, and of course this does not help to promote mental stability or physical health.

One of America's leading experts, Harvey Brenner of Johns Hopkins University, established in a study spanning a long period of time that a direct link exists between increasing unemployment and the increasing incidence of heart disease, suicide, murder, divorce, mental illness, and alcoholism. He also notes that the spread of these misfortunes in connection with the growth of unemployment affects not only those who have lost their jobs but society as a whole.

There are any number of concrete examples to bear this out. Immediately after the Chrysler Corporation closed its factory in Ionia, Michigan, one person committed suicide, another attempted to do so, and three suffered from mental disorders. Many of Ionia's citizens began drinking heavily, and more began turning to psychiatrists for help. In Kokomo, Indiana, where the rate of unemployment is sixteen percent, a special center has been created to furnish assistance — in the form of advice — to those without jobs. The center is swamped with cases involving violence and divorce in the families of the unemployed.

"Unemployment, like love, sex and inflation, is a subject about which it is almost impossible to write originally," remarks Professor Yves Laulan, a columnist for the weekly magazine *Newsweek* and one of America's best-known journalists. The comment is telling and has an inkling of humor. Laulan does not promise to be original, but this can only be seen as the coquetry of a professional. His opening phrase, quoted above, cannot be faulted as pedestrian, and the column's head instantly attracts attention: "Unthinkable Thoughts." In the notation used for chess games an exclamation point would certainly be placed after such a neat and unanticipated stroke. Let us see, then, what these "unthinkable thoughts" are; they certainly deserve attention as the West's latest word on the vital problem of unemployment.

Laulan acknowledges that a problem exists, and says it "is going to be around for a long, long time." Having to admit these truths is apparently unpleasant; Laulan calls them banal. And then comes an unexpected question: "Is full employment really a natural, normal phenomenon in our society?" Puzzlement is expressed over how it came to be that "full employment was raised to the dignity of a natural right and inserted in various constitutions and charters on the same footing as the right to life, freedom and happiness."

Talking about full employment, about the unconditional elimination of joblessness, is the sad fate of Western politicians, says Laulan. But he does not hold this burdensome chore to be their standing obligation, either. "Is full employment at all possible?" the professor asks. "No political leader would dare to reply in the negative. He would immediately lose all credit with the public and all chance of re-election." Our learned author does not think the politicians who promise to do away with unemployment are demagogues; for them, he writes "belief in full employment is an act of faith which dispenses with

analysis." It is this neglected analysis that Laulan proposes to supply.

What follows, however, suffers from the same "unthinkable" originality that distinguishes Laulan's style. "Divide and rule," a bit of ancient cunning advises, and our professor shows great skill in applying it. He declares that the problem of full employment can be partially resolved in the West: it would be quite possible to find work for every grown man of the white race. Laulan does not promise the same abundance to working people of other races, young people, or women. Then he sets workers at loggerheads with the unions, which he accuses of furthering the growth of unemployment by — of all things — fighting for higher wages.

"But even more unthinkable thoughts come to mind," the article continues. "What about the conflict between the right to work and the right to learn?" Laulan claims that the West's system of education has developed too far and now constitutes a cause of unemployment: lily-handed graduates in the exact sciences do not want to become machine operators, preferring instead to swell the ranks of the unemployed. And of course we are reminded that in the industrialized societies of the West higher education is "open to almost everyone." (What difficulties of interpretation arise over that sly "almost"!) Hereupon follows an utterly "unthinkable thought":

"Up till now, it has been universally understood that education enables those born without social privileges, i. e., the sons of peasants and workers, to improve their social condition and living standards. But today this is in danger of becoming less true.... Education would then become the same kind of luxury as ballet school or acquiring a mastery of Esperanto or chess."

Not only has our author painted himself into a demagogic corner; in his exertions he has let his disguise slip. Under the academic robe we glimpse — let us put it mildly — an old-fashioned retrograde. Why, he asks, should the children of workers and peasants be sent to universities?

In developing his thoughts about the harm education does by aggravating the unemployment problem, Laulan comes up with a startling idea. "The introduction of democracy in the nineteenth century," he points out, "was based on the principle of social improvement through mass education. This belief has now suffered a severe blow." And from whom, do you think? You will never guess! It turns out to be the students, with their active protests against the existing order in the West — an order that condemns the greater part of them to unemployment after

they graduate. What naughty, ungrateful young people! And probably it is all because of the workers' and peasants' children in their midst.

In discussing labor in the USA, one cardinal fact must always be kept in mind: no laws exist that guarantee work.

Millions of children and teenagers in the United States are subject to the most shameless exploitation. Indeed there exist special laws that allow employers to hire thirteen- to nineteen-year-olds and pay them a miserable wage.

One of the social and moral aspects of unemployment in the USA, and of the uncertainty working people feel about the future, is the problem of employment in industry versus the arms buildup. It is sad but true that the military expenditures of the United States are constantly increasing. Some might think there is at least a bright side to this too: employment, it might be supposed, increases along with military spending, and some of those without jobs are thus enabled to earn their bread in the arms industry. Alas, this is a mistaken conclusion. A special report circulated by Senator Edward Kennedy indicated that the USA's latest military budget had taken hundreds of thousands of jobs away from the American people. It was calculated that each increase of one billion dollars in the military budget resulted in the loss of 11,600 jobs. The report specifically stressed that despite the myths spread by official propaganda, military spending does not benefit the economy or increase employment; on the contrary, it leads to unemployment. The reason is that military expenditures are "capital intensive"; they demand great outlays for equipment and costly materials. Capital so employed creates fewer jobs than would the investment of the same amount towards peaceful ends.

It is probably old hat to talk about how another fundamental human right — the right to education — is realized in the USA. Fact remains fact: if you want a higher education, you have to pay. The cost, moreover, is not trifling — several thousand dollars a year. In my travels around the United States I have often stayed in student dormitories, where I could not help noticing that worries about paying tuition hang constantly over students like a dark cloud. Everyone whose parents are not well-to-do has to work part time or go to great lengths to obtain one of the few available scholarships, which come not from the government but from fortuitious private sources. Here is a curious example of how big the problem of paying for education really is. None other than Terrel Bell, the head of the United States Department of Education, complained that

his salary — something on the order of forty thousand dollars a year — was not enough to keep his three sons in college.

In the USA the early 80s were marked by a relentless growth in prices, including the price of education. A year at Harvard, for instance, now costs students more than ten thousand dollars.

There is more to the problem, however, than the need to come up with the money. Elementary and secondary schooling is free, but still not all children attend, or stay in until graduation. The reason for this is obvious: social inequality. *Newsweek* reports that "about 23 million American adults, as well as an estimated 13 percent of 17-year-olds, are functionally illiterate. They exist on the fringes of a society whose economic wheels are greased by the printed word. And they are ashamed: they live in fear that someday, someone will discover their secret." Kennedy Mumford, principal of an adult-education center, testifies to the same thing: "There are a lot more illiterate people than we realize. But they haven't come to us for help. Most people seem to do very well in conversation. You wouldn't know they can't read, write or do arithmetic."

It is also well known how things stand in the USA with the right to medical care. The problem here, though, is not just the astronomical costs involved. The champions of the American way of life are always quick to point out that health insurance exists to cover those high costs. Yes, such insurance does exist. There is no unified system, it is true, but all the various plans require regular payments to a fund from which money is furnished in case of illness. It should be remembered, however, that twenty-two million Americans have no medical insurance at all, twenty million have coverage insufficient to pay for even a few days in a hospital, and forty-one million have insurance only against accidents.

Does this insurance provide security from all the misfortunes that come with temporary incapacitation and a more or less extended period of treatment? In 1980 the *Reader's Digest* asked the question: "Can you afford a major illness?" And supplied its own immediate and very definite answer: "Most Americans can't!"

A premature baby was born to a young couple in the state of Colorado. Their infant son spent several weeks in a pediatric hospital, where he underwent a serious operation. His parents eventually received two bills: one from their doctor, for $3,200; and one from the hospital, for $ 66,000. They had no insurance. The husband's monthly income was $ 700.

The wife of a retired office worker had a heart operation and died a few weeks afterward. The bereaved husband was billed $ 30,000 for the treatment she had received. All the money they had saved up over the long years was gone, and still the insurance was not enough. The widower was left in debt to the hospital for $ 6,000. Where was he to get the money, when his monthly pension check was only $ 400?

"If you are like most Americans, you could face the same grim prospects," says the *Reader's Digest*. Meanwhile, health insurance premiums are a "huge burden" on Americans, to quote the *Reader's Digest* once again. There is plainly a need for legislation that would meet the costs of major illnesses. The United States Senate replies to this: "We would all like a comprehensive plan where everybody would be covered. We do not have the money."

In conclusion, just a little more about what Americans jokingly call the "medical-industrial complex." Its annual profits have long since topped $ 200 billion. (They were $ 217 billion in 1979.) This titanic sum is amassed out of charges for different services: $ 150 for a visit to a doctor; $ 250 for one day's hospitalization; and $ 1,500 for a day in an intensive care unit. And things are getting worse, not better. "For the past two decades," writes U. S. News & World Report, "government has played the dominant role in health care, providing until recently generous federal aid (money collected from the people as taxes — *V. N.*) for basic research and funding for medicare, medicaid and other tax-supported programs. Now the Reagan administration wants to shift leadership to the private sector and let the marketplace determine medical prices and services."

So much for the situation in general. The facts and figures speak for themselves and are convincing enough when they appear on the printed page. They strike home even more forcefully, however, when you hear about such things from Americans who have been overtaken by misfortune, when you see what happens to a person in this sort of hopeless distress.

One American I knew, a man approaching retirement age, was taken seriously ill and spent several months in the hospital. All his insurance coverage was exhausted. At first he made up the difference out of some savings he had; then he went into debt. I was able to keep an eye on him for some time after his recovery. It was as if the wind had been knocked out of him. His debts were more crushing than the illness had been. It was plain to see that his life had been radically changed. He had

become an entirely different person. Quite simply, he had lost heart. In various conversations with me he kept returning to his stay in the hospital, informing me, with characteristic American exactness, just how much he had paid for each day, for various tests, for x-rays, etc. He spoke with a certain surprise, as if he had never heard of such charges before, but he was not so much indignant as despondent, sunk in hopeless gloom. He knew there was no good in beating his head against a wall. These dead ends of despair, where there is no one who will help — not the system, not a fellow human being — serve as an additional catalyst dehumanizing the morals of a society whose banner bears the device of militant individualism: Everyone for himself against all the rest! A person raised in this tradition faces the misfortunes that befall him all alone. There is no quarter to which he can look for aid, and indeed he does not hope for any. "Bad luck!" he will say. The expression is used frequently in America.

In speaking of the rights of American citizens, the topic of women's rights must not be omitted. Women have long been deprived of their rights in the USA, and this is still acutely felt today. A woman journalist who interviewed me once in Washington was very interested in hearing about where women stand in our country, and complained about the situation in the USA. Her mood was aggressive — and understandably so, considering the inferior status American women are still placed in. In the course of our conversation I gradually became aware that her anger extended to me as well, as if I were responsible for the indignities American women suffer. The reason was that in answering her questions about the position of women in the Soviet Union I had said, among other things, that regardless of the equality between the sexes that exists in our society it was always a good thing for a woman to remain a woman, to do what she can to make life more gracious and above all to raise good children. That really drew her wrath down on me! And when the interview was eventually published in the newspaper she took me to task for making such remarks. In their just struggle many American women, including this journalist, go to such lengths as to deny a woman's right to femininity.

Their overzealousness and extremism are readily understandable. To begin with, in the USA women's earnings come to fifty-nine percent of men's, although women make up forty-two percent of the work force. The American woman has long since ceased to be only a wife and mother. She works at a job, just

as a man does, but receives only half of what is considered his due in payment.

The inequality of women in the USA does not stem from arbitrary acts by the men who own and run businesses; it is firmly based in the laws. Legislation currently in force in the USA has more than eight hundred sections and articles discriminating against women. This is a tradition of long standing, and it has been more than a hundred years since American women began the struggle for their rights. In 1848 a group of activists in the American women's movement produced a declaration calling on women to join the fight. The smoke shows no signs of clearing yet.

The scope of the women's movement has grown much broader in our days, of course. I saw this for myself at the National Women's Conference in Houston, Texas. The choice of that city was significant in itself; Houston is the USA's space capital, an ultramodern, fast-growing city. Slightly more than two thousand delegates, and over twelve thousand observers, gathered in the enormous Sam Houston Colosseum. The reports and debates were spirited and charged with conviction. There was discussion on many questions, and twenty-six resolutions were adopted. But all this is — as they say — on the one hand. On the other hand, the official one, is the unwillingness to pass a constitutional amendment proclaiming equality between men and women. Yes, that is correct — to this day the Constitution of the United States has not a word to say about equal rights for women.

It is highly indicative of the moral climate current in the USA that in recent years women there have achieved equality in one field — the military. They may now serve in the infantry, the air force, and the navy. Already more than six percent of the USA's military personnel are women, although even during World War II women made up less than two percent of the American armed forces and generally served in auxiliary units at that. But now, in peacetime, the Pentagon has granted full equality to women, and they serve in combat units on an equal basis with men. A dubious privilege!

An important aspect of the movement for women's rights in the USA is the fight against the exploitation of women's bodies, which has long been a big business there. The reason police are powerless to do anything about prostitution and pornography is that these criminal businesses bring immense profits to their organizers, making it easy for them to scoff at both the law and public opinion. Later we will take a closer

look at this typically American situation, which does much to poison the moral atmosphere of the country and thus affects the everyday life and attitudes of its inhabitants. Here, in regard to the legal position of American women, it will be enough to note that this sort of shameful exploitation is further proof that true equality is still a regrettably long ways away.

Finally, a brief word about the political rights of women in the USA. Women make up 52.2 percent of the electorate, but among the one hundred members of the United States Senate there is not a single woman. The number of women in elective office throughout the country is insignificant.

The elections held in the United States are remarkable for more than the discrimination against women they demonstrate. Almost half of the USA's elegible voters fail to turn out for the presidential elections. Why? Because they do not consider the exercise serious enough to be worth their time and trouble. As a rule an ordinary American understands that he has nothing to do with deciding who will lead his country and who will be elected to Congress. The *New York Times* has calculated that the average cost of electing a candidate to the Senate is $920,000. Almost a million! For the election of a president the figure is in the tens of millions. It is those who furnish the money that decide who will be elected and who will not. Americans know the value of money and what it can do. They do not find it hard to grasp how the levers of the political machine are worked from backstage. Hence the indifference to the traditional hullabaloo surrounding election campaigns.

The percentage of voters participating in the 1980 elections was 52.3 — the lowest figure for the past several decades. Only 26 percent of the electorate (slightly over forty million people) gave its votes to Ronald Reagan, who was elected President. Only 39 percent of the American electorate voted in the 1982 Congressional elections.

Another fact worthy of note is that only forty-three percent of registered voters call themselves Democrats, and only twenty-two percent Republicans. Nonetheless it is between these two bourgeois parties that the struggle for the White House and Congressional seats is waged. It would thus be incorrect to call the tens of millions of Americans who do not go to the polls at election time apolitical; they are just sensible people who do not exercise their right to vote because, quite justifiably, they consider it a fiction. Given this inertness among the electorate, the whole election campaign comes down to a squabble between the activists of the two parties over the division of the government pie. This is the truth behind the myth of "elective

democracy," which is numbered among the rights enjoyed by Americans. By the way, there is not one black, not one Hispanic, and not one worker among the one hundred United States Senators.

The question of privacy — a concept that includes the inviolability of the person and of private life — is directly related to American law and the rights of American citizens. The ideologues of bourgeois society like to maintain that privacy is sacred, that their world is founded on it, so to speak. Paradoxical as it might seem, though, this supposedly sacred right of privacy is violated on every side.

First of all let us ask what is the stock in trade of the bourgeois press, or to put it more precisely how and with what it holds the attention of the reading public. With stories, rumors, and gossip about the lives of people that interest the man in the street. No bounds or rules of decency confine the press in its constant rummagings in other people's dirty laundry. True, the USA does have laws under which a person who believes he has been publicly defamed can bring suit against the publication responsible, demanding an apology and material compensation for the injury to his good name. The right exists, but not everyone would be bold enough to exercise it. During the trial the paper or magazine called to account will do everything conceivable (and even more!) to blacken the reputation of its victim still further. Failing that, it will prolong the case endlessly, wearing down the plaintiff in a drawn-out litigation such as only a few can afford. As a rule the publication will have more resources and capabilities than the complainant, whose name will thus suffer further public battering and whose legal bills will mount up inexorably.

It may be noted that this tactic is frequently employed in American legal practice. One of the parties conducts a campaign of attrition, using every possible legal device to keep the case open until the other side runs out of money. And so, rich makes right!

Well-known Americans, usually from the fields of cinema, television, or sport, often become the victims of sensationalism. They are made into idols by the concentrated efforts of the mass media and then cast down by the same hands. At first the behind-the-scenes operators who have invested their money in the creation of a new star paint an alluring and faultless image for the public. The newcomer captures hearts; the backers make money. But nothing lasts forever in this world. Time passes, the star dims or simply ages, and the star-makers, who

want to go on making money on their creation, look around for ways to fan the public's fading interest. Intimate personal details, real or invented, begin to be circulated: love stories and scandals connected with them, divorces and raucous divorce proceedings, conflicts between stars and their children, and so forth. This gossipmongering keeps the idol in the public eye for a little longer. But experience with this kind of exploitation shows that oftentimes the stars cannot hold up. Neither fame nor fortune can save them from anguish, and events move towards a tragic end.

The star, outraged on every hand, frequently undertakes to defend his honor. He calls the slick tattletales employed by the press, television, and radio into court. But this only adds fuel to the flames and hastens the fated outcome. Once again a mockery is made of justice. Instead of defending the slandered victim it takes the side of his tormentors. The trial itself becomes a public spectacle with the star cast as a sacrificial offering.

The history of American show business is full of examples. Some have been destroyed morally, others physically. The celebrated film actress Marylin Monroe was hounded into suicide by the lovers of dirty sensations. Rita Hayworth, her predecessor on the Hollywood throne, received the Triumph of Popularity prize about thirty years ago. For her the triumph ended in tragedy. Rita Hayworth was made into a star according to all the canons of show business. They changed her name, made her a blonde instead of a brunette, tinkered with her face, and so on. Her roles brought more and more money, and her fame grew by leaps and bounds. Then came scandals, rumors, widely publicized divorces. Sleeping pills did not help her to recover her shattered health. She began to drink, then became addicted to drugs. In the end she suffered a severe nervous breakdown.

Not long ago Freddie Prinze, star of a popular television series, put a bullet through his forehead at age twenty-two. Case after case could be cited. In recent years Liza Minelli has emerged as a bright new stage and screen star. Her talents are in fact considerable; she is a dramatic actress, and also a fine singer and dancer. The fame she has achieved instantly put her on the conveyer belt of gossip and tawdry sensations. Her life with her husband, Jack Haley, who is a well-known screenwriter and director, became public property. Liza Minelli's mother was Judy Garland, another very famous actress who took her own life — like Marylin Monroe, the subject of Jack Haley's best-known film.

Meanwhile American propagandists go on spinning their fairy tales about how America's laws and courts safeguard the interests of the individual and the inviolability of his private life.

One American whom I came to know rather closely was a man who had learned Russian purely out of an interest in our culture and afterwards discovered that his knowledge could be useful to him professionally. It was only when we had been acquainted for some time that he told me, bit by bit, about the trouble his studying had landed him in. As soon as he had achieved a command of our language he was asked to go to work for American intelligence. The offer was presented with unceremonious insistence, almost as an ultimatum. They wanted to send him to the Soviet Union as an exchange student right away. My friend, a rather diffident intellectual, was stunned. I think it was his shock that made him want to confide in me. He was very frightened and made me promise over and over again that I would not reveal his name to anyone.

The noted American publicist David Wise writes in his book *The American Police State: The Government Against the People* that for approximately four decades, under seven different administrations, government intelligence and police forces have broken laws and violated the Constitution. Among the methods the government has used against citizens are wiretapping, break-ins and illegal seizure of property, the opening of letters and interception of telegrams, visual observation, and secret provocations. Informers have been widely employed, and lists of suspicious persons have been drawn up.

It is common knowledge that America's secret police, the FBI, keeps a watchful eye on citizens. Until recently less was known about another side of the FBI's activities — provocations that flout human rights and constitute a threat to society and to world peace. It appears that the FBI has long specialized in fomenting anti-Soviet hysteria and spreading rumors about a supposedly growing "Soviet threat" and the alleged infiltration of American society by Communists. These subversion campaigns are conducted systematically, persistently, and with copious expenditures of government funds and effort.

A wide variety of approaches is used in going about this pernicious work. For example, the FBI tells owners of businesses what political views their employees hold and what political activities they engage in. Another means of proceeding against "undesirables" might be called typically American: the FBI informs financial institutions that it considers certain persons

and organizations politically unreliable and asks that no credit be extended to them. Slanders and rumors are also used against political opponents. Many noted Americans have suffered such persecution for their progressive views, and of course the unknown victims, whose names Americans have never heard and never will, are more numerous by far. Retributions of this sort flagrantly transgress against the private lives of citizens, which the demagogues who glorify the American way of life like to claim is inviolable in the USA.

J. Edgar Hoover is known to have made a personal effort to discredit America's foremost black freedom fighter, Martin Luther King. He failed. Then King's life was cut short by a bullet from the gun of a hired killer.

The circumstances under which the noted American actress Jean Seberg committed suicide left no doubt that the FBI was to blame for her death. The public has never been told how many other such acts of vengeance have been perpetrated; the report of a special Senate committee that investigated the FBI's activities counted 2,300. Is this sufficient grounds to speak of violations of human rights in the USA? And who can guarantee that all the FBI's crimes of this type have been included?

The tragic story of Jean Seberg is a clear illustration of the workings of the diabolical machine that destroyed her. Although she herself was white, Seberg used her status as a film star to take a public stand in defense of black Americans' rights, thereby violating a commandment the FBI guards as sacred. After her death her former husband, the writer Romain Gary, declared that she had been victimized by the FBI. An investigation ensued, and the charges were borne out in their entirety. It was discovered that J. Edgar Hoover, the head of the FBI at that time, had engineered the smear campaign that drove Seberg to take her own life. The Los Angeles division of the FBI arranged for a slander against Seberg to be printed in the *Los Angeles Times*; from there the story was picked up by *Newsweek* magazine. And so the FBI, with the aid of America's "free" press, succeeded in wrecking the life of a woman who had displeased America's rulers.

The FBI also makes use of front organizations that pretend to be dedicated to progressive causes but are actually tools of its undercover agents. It sows conflict among different left-wing groupings and subjects leaders of the progressive movement to blackmail and public defamation. The *New York Times*

reports that the FBI has informers in the national news media, in universities, and in charitable organizations.

In 1956 the FBI had dossiers with fingerprints and personal information on 141 million Americans. Only twenty percent of this number had any kind of connection with the underworld. The other eighty percent — 112 million individuals — were included in the FBI's files as "unreliable" and "subscribing to questionable views." This sort of thing is an American tradition of long standing. The notorious Senator Joseph McCarthy unearthed at least two hundred "secret Communists" in the Truman administration, thereby launching a nationwide witch hunt.

The Central Intelligence Agency works hand and glove with the FBI. When the CIA was created in 1947, it was expressly stipulated that the new organization was not to operate within the United States. This good intention was afterwards consigned to oblivion, and now the CIA works in partnership with the FBI, persecuting Americans for political non-conformity, cultivating the myth of a Soviet threat, and seeking to undermine the progressive movement in the USA with talk about "ties to Moscow." As if this were not enough, there are yet other organizations that have full official sanction to conduct police surveillance over the lives of Americans. It would seem that Army Intelligence, for example, has work of its own to do. But no — it too keeps an eye on the civilian population at home. Then there is the National Security Agency, originally set up with the primary purpose of gathering intelligence data. Now American citizens come under its scrutiny as well. What a lot of police nursemaids the American people has! Their number and activities hardly serve to better the moral climate of the country, and they have a perceptible effect on everyday life and behavior.

What is more, this sort of infringement on the most elementary human rights is becoming the norm even outside the USA's police and intelligence services. President Nixon's White House staff put together a secret memorandum that spoke of a need to compile a list of the administration's political opponents: political leaders, journalists, etc. The memorandum also discussed ways in which federal agencies could be used to blackmail, intimidate, and bring financial pressure against those who incurred the administration's disfavor (politicians, journalists, and so on). This document is a prime example — an anatomy, if you will — of the whole system of police surveillance and police persecution in the USA. And it comes

straight from the White House! Some might claim that the Nixon administration was an exception, that things have been different under other presidents. But this is not so. After the Watergate affair American journalists probed more searchingly into the history of the White House. They discovered that police surveillance, wiretapping, and similar tactics were also employed by earlier chief executives.

And so it turns out that in the country that calls most loudly for the defense of human rights, the position of those rights is more than perilous.

Power Visible and Invisible

How do Americans feel about their country and their government? The many people I have met and talked with in the USA and the impressions I have gathered over the years make it possible for me to attempt an answer to that question. As a rule Americans are patriotic, proud of the immense size and the riches of their native land. They are proud of their history, too. It may comprise only two hundred years, but Americans see in it an age of unprecedented growth, which they attribute to human industry and talent — another source of great pride.

Americans take a different, and not particularly respectful, view of their government, especially of the federal (i. e. central) government. There are more than a few reasons for this. One is the eternal discontent of the taxpayer; everybody thinks he is paying too much. It is certainly true that the USA's military and its sprawling bureaucracy consume huge sums. The average American feels he is having to carry the weight for too many free-loaders, and holds the federal government — Washington, that is — to blame. The endless political scandals and the corruption among both legislators and high ranking members of the executive do not help to promote respect for leaders either.

These things are only too obvious — surface phenomena, they might be called. There is, however, yet another reason for the rather cool attitude Americans take towards their government, a reason I consider more deep and fundamental. Americans seem to understand that behind the power visible to all stands another — a power that is unofficial, invisible, but that actually holds sway. Isn't this why almost half of those elegible to vote usually fail to cast ballots in the presidential elections? They realize that in the end the choice is not theirs,

that the country's fate is not in fact decided by the man in the White House.

Let us begin with well-known facts. Anyone who seeks elective office in the USA needs money, since campaigning is a very costly business. The price for getting a president elected is now over two hundred million dollars. Who can furnish such sums? Big business. The Rockefeller clan, for instance, has contributed more than $ 250 million to the Republican Party since the beginning of this century. During the Congressional election campaign of 1978, Texas oil companies gave their candidates a total of twenty million dollars.

Everyone knows who is running for office and who is elected in the end. The ones who supply the money remain behind the scenes, in the shadows. But the politicians who accept their dollars know them only too well. The vital financial tie between business and the official ruling elite is never broken. It finds expression in different ways, one of which is known as lobbying.

A lobby, of course, is a sort of corridor, vestibule, or foyer. It was in such crowded places that the agents of big business used to press their demands on legislators. Things are done more discreetly today. The representatives of big business have more than five hundred regular offices in Washington, employing 15,000 lobbyists in all — twenty-eight for every member of Congress. American statistics, which encompass nearly everything, report that in five years the number of lobbyists has almost doubled. The Ford Motor Company, for example, which had three Washington lobbyists in 1960, had forty by the end of the 70s. Turning to another line of business — civil aviation — we find that seventy-seven airlines have lobbies in America's capital.

A great variety of means exists for exerting pressure on legislators: persuasion and bribes, blackmail and presents. Money, of course, comes first among these means: the law-makers pay back what was given them during their election campaigns, and receive further handouts.

Suppose a bill proposing changes in the way corporations are taxed is laid before the Senate. The Senators, one after another, bring forward their suggestions and propose amendments. Standard procedure. But suddenly things go off course. Senator Edward Kennedy takes the floor. In the interests of his own political struggle he presents convincing evidence that what underlies the proposals being made are the interests of giant monopolies such as Mobile Oil, Uniroyal, Lockheed,

McDonnel Douglas, Litton Industries, and the Transamerica Corporation, each of which stands to reap millions of dollars in profits if the amendments are adopted. There can be no doubt that some of the money will find its way to the senators who proposed the "golden" amendments to the bill under discussion. Debates over proposed measures are commonplace, but seldom does anyone make an exposure like Kennedy's. As a rule the visible power dutifully serves the interests of the real, invisible power.

It should also be remembered that Congressmen, besides being under fierce pressure from lobbyists, are often deeply interested themselves. According to official figures, two thirds of the members of the United States Congress have significant financial interests outside. Many legislators, that is to say, not only play politics for businessmen but are also businessmen themselves. The activities of Congressmen and lobbyists, concealed from outsiders, are what sets the course of the whole political machine. The visible part can be compared to the tip of an iceberg; the other nine tenths are below the surface, out of sight.

Lobbies are a typically American phenomenon, something of which we in the Soviet Union have no experience. As in many other instances, careful examination and analysis is preferable to condemning something out of hand after only a superficial look. Proponents of the American way of life might say that lobbies exist to keep Congressmen informed, to place before them the opinions of a great variety of social groups. And it is true that not only American business circles but also many professional and public organizations, and even foreign countries maintain lobbies in Washington. (Lobbies of the last sort are like duplicate embassies established to influence the American Congress.) It is curious, however, that the Americans themselves are not at all eager to publicize the activities of Washington lobbies. There were many times when it was not at all difficult for me to gain admission to the long corridors and roomy offices of Capitol Hill. I met with Congressmen, talked with them, had lunch with them. Making contacts among the lobbyists is not so simple. In the first place, they are the ones — because of their particular line of work — who usually seek out the people they need. In the second place, all of their work is done in a sort of half-secrecy, even though they are officially registered.

Senator Ribicoff maintains that "the Congress and the public should be aware of who's trying to influence whom and

why and for what." A noble wish! But as a rule when such wishes come true in Washington the result is yet another political scandal, such as the Seoul version of Watergate — "Koreagate," as it came to be known in Washington. The case is a clear example of how lobbies go about their business.

The chief Korean lobbyist in Washington was Tong-sun Park, who called himself a businessman. He spent a number of years in the capital and was known as a big spender. He seemed to have money to burn: he held lavish receptions and founded the fashionable Georgetown Club for Washington's high society, investing three million dollars in the undertaking. All of this was done with just one aim — to gain influence in the United States Congress. It was later learned that behind the elegant screen of his social whirl Tong-sun Park was actively recruiting Congressmen to serve the interests of South Korea's rulers. He used every sort of device, including bribes. And year after year Park's lobbying brought the desired fruit. Washington allocated more and more "aid" to South Korea ($ 12 billion over twenty years), and Seoul, out of those billions, furnished Park with millions to use in buying legislators. A simple cycle!

There is no telling how many years more the canny South Korean might have paraded on the Washington scene if his affairs had not unexpectedly developed a criminal cast. A certain Mrs. Howe, the head of First Lady Elizabeth Ford's White House staff, became enmeshed in Park's nets together with her husband, Mr. James Howe, who eventually committed suicide. An investigation ensued. It was learned that Park was a South Korean intelligence agent and that one hundred and fifteen past and present members of Congress were involved with him. The Congressional committee was forced to question all members of Congress; no one could claim to be above suspicion. It remains to be said that Park safely returned to Seoul and that little by little the scandal was hushed up in Washington.

The pro-Israel lobby, already mentioned in our discussion of problems involving nationalities, has an even larger scope and deeper influence. Indeed, it is one of the most powerful in Washington, believed in the USA to have the ear of two thirds of the Senate. Among the other foreign lobbies, that of the racist Republic of South Africa may be mentioned. Its representatives have had a fair degree of success in winning over or suborning legislators.

The scandal involving President Carter's brother Billy pro-

vides another glimpse into the essence of lobbyism. Billy was quick to turn his kinship with the President into dollars. The representatives of an Arab country were willing to pay $ 220,000 in return for his promise to lend them a helping hand in Washington. A typical example of influence-peddling! The question of whether Billy Carter actually carried any weight with his brother is problematic. Nonetheless, one side hoped to gain influence (paying $ 220,000 for it), while the other (Billy) was willing to take advantage of the situation. The deal was made in secret, but later everything came into the open and the President's brother was forced to register with the Justice Department as an agent of a foreign government, as required by law. This much belated act saved Billy from prosecution, but could not keep the White House from getting embroiled in yet another scandal.

Time magazine's article on "The Swarming Lobbyists" was sub-titled "Washington's new billion-dollar game of who can influence whom." The word "new" evokes some doubts — it is hardly new. And it is not a "game" at all! On the whole, though, the sense of what is taking place was properly grasped: billions of dollars are going towards making the political machine work for the people who supply the money. *Time* notes that there has been a "startling increase in the influence of special-interest lobbyists." What does this mean in concrete terms? The article states that "partly because of this influence, President Carter has encountered serious difficulty in getting legislation through Congress; partly because of this influence Congress itself is becoming increasingly balky and unmanageable." But no, that is not right at all! Congress is quite manageable; the only question is who is managing it. The answer is apparent from even one example.

Indignation is mounting throughout the country over the way arms manufacturers have turned the United States into the Shooting States of America. Anyone can buy a gun, and prices are quite affordable. The disastrous consequences are well known. It might be thought the lawmakers in Washington, the "chosen representatives of the people," would take note of the way things stand and harken to the voice of angry Americans. But no: in the span of ten years Congress has turned down fourteen bills to place controls on the sale of firearms. Behind the "nay" votes stands the firearm manufacturers' lobby.

It goes without saying that corporations making fighter planes, bombers, submarines, missiles, and so on have even more money. Their lobbies are the richest and most influential in

Washington. They are the representatives of the real invisible power.

The corporations whose business is war have a more complex relationship to Congress than those of other companies. More complex and at the same time more effective. This is because such lobbies are a component of that vast, all-American phenomenon known as the military-industrial complex, which holds the real power in the USA if anyone does. Its main parts are the US Department of Defense and the Pentagon, Congress and the lobbies in which Congress is enmeshed, and the armaments industry.

The workings of the military-industrial complex are intricate but well-ordered. In the Congressional link there are four committees to be noted, two in the Senate and two in the House. They are concerned with the armed forces and the military budget; most importantly, it is on them that the extension of credit for arms depends. The chairmen of these committees are persons of no mean rank in the military-industrial complex. Mendel Rivers was one of them for many years as head of the House Armed Services Committee. In this capacity he personified the visible portion of the far larger, invisible power that actually rules the USA. Standing at the center of public attention, he was the voice of that invisible and usually silent power. It might even be said that he propounded its philosophy. It is for this reason only that Rivers has been mentioned here. He has passed on, as they say, but his philosophy has not passed with him. It remains in the bedrock of the military-industrial complex.

It was said that Rivers could arm or disarm America single-handed. It was not he alone, of course, that did the arming, but he was the one who championed the arms race. That was his job, and he did it. He advised President Truman to drop the atomic bomb on Korean territory as well as on Japan. He advocated the use of nuclear weapons in Vietnam too.

Rivers came to Congress from Charleston, South Carolina. Local business made no miscalculation in sending him to Washington: through his efforts quiet, patriarchal Charleston became what is now perhaps the most militarized of America's cities. The projects included an air base, a naval base, a missile testing ground, a military shipyard, a nuclear submarine training center, Army and Navy supply depots, arsenals, a Marine training camp, and a Coast Guard base. Rivers was not the only Congressman to obtain such favors. The budgets of three hundred and sixty-three of the four hundred and thirty-five dis-

tricts that elect representatives are dependant on military spending.

The invisible power that governs the USA is made up of many components and takes a wide variety of forms, some of them little known to the public. One of these is the Businessmen's Round Table, among whose members are the heads of the USA's biggest corporations. As noted in the American press, this organization overshadows all of business's other cooperative efforts. Its first Chairman of the Board of Directors was Irving Shapiro, head of E.I. du Pont de Nemours. From their seats at the Round Table the leaders of big business dictate their will to government and legislators. They find no difficulty in getting the attention of Representatives, Senators, cabinet members, and even the President himself.

An even more recondite seat of invisible power in the USA are the so-called clubs, which have behind them a long-established tradition brought over by settlers from England. The USA has numerous clubs of all sorts, but attention here is on those which bring business people together. This is how Dreiser, in his novel *The Titan*, describes the Union League Club, whose members were Philadelphia business leaders:

"There were short and long men, lean and stout, dark and blond men, with eyes and jaws which varied from those of the tiger, lynx, and bear to those of the fox, the tolerant mastiff, and the surly bulldog. There were no weaklings in this selected company."

The USA's business elite is united by forty clubs, to which an estimated six thousand of the country's leading business figures belong. Ferdinand Lundberg, author of *The Rich and the Super-Rich*, writes: "If one wants to know who really matters behind the scenes of national affairs, in the order that they matter, one can hardly do better than to line up the memberships of the New York clubs in the order given. Now add each of the central non-New York clubs: Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Washington, Cleveland, etc., in about that order. Strike out duplications as they appear." Lundberg argues that the clubs have more say in how the country is governed than the United States Senate.

These clubs are private preserves, no outsiders are admitted. Even America's mass media, for all their skill in getting at the story, are powerless before the barricades of secrecy that ring these peculiar institutions, where the holders of invisible power conduct their affairs in an informal atmosphere of luxurious ease.

A knowledgeable American source has said that Richard Nixon was elected President as the result of an agreement reached at the Bohemian Club. The members of this private organization, which is now over a hundred years old, are hardly Bohemian; they comprise the California business elite. President Hoover, himself a member, described the club as a great assemblage of the representatives of business and high politics. The American sociologist G. William Domhoff, who wrote a book about the Bohemian Club and organizations like it, calls his work "A Study in Ruling-Class Cohesiveness." Domhoff reports that it was at the Bohemian Club that the decision was made in 1942 to go ahead with production of the atomic bomb. That questions such as this should be settled behind the firmly closed doors of posh clubs, with their caste basis and their absolute secrecy, shows once again how disastrously far removed America's real rulers are from the people and from public opinion.

The choice of political leaders is also made in the fastnesses of clubs and in the offices of monopolies. It is common knowledge that Ronald Reagan was formerly employed by one of America's largest corporations, General Electric. He hosted its weekly television program, *General Electric Theater*, and advertised the company and its products for a number of years. It was noted in the American press as far back as 1965 that the new conservative presidential candidate was a General Electric nominee.

As leader of the capitalist world the United States has achieved notable success in creating centers of invisible power not only domestically but also worldwide. The international centers operate under the aegis of the United States, of course. One of them is the Bilderbergers Group. The London *Times* points out that neither Rockefeller nor Rothschild has ever missed a single one of its meetings, where the leaders of the capitalist world not only talk business but also carry on international politics. At the first meeting of the Bilderbergers Group, in 1954, members considered questions such as how to defend Europe from communism and what policy to pursue in regard to the Soviet Union. In 1955 the topic of discussion was the influence of Communists in the West; in 1956, the communist danger in Asia.

In 1973 a new supranational forum for big business was created — the Trilateral Commission. Among its founders were the Rockefeller, Morgan, and Rothschild financial groups. It unites the monopolistic interests of the USA, Europe, and Japan.

American presidents are generally deferential towards the narrow, exclusive, and aloof fellowship of world business lead-

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ers. And with good reason. Nixon, for example, flattered them with the remark that anyone could become President of the United States, but only a few could aspire to the presidency of the Bohemian Club. After that, there is probably nothing more that needs to be said about the relation between visible and invisible power.

Profits and Doomsday

The Boeing 747, America's largest passenger plane (seating more than three hundred) was on its way from New York to Los Angeles. We had begun our flight west precisely on schedule. An hour and a half later (the flight crossways over the continent, from one end of America to the other, takes five hours), the velvet baritone of the captain announced over the public-address system: "Because of technical difficulties, we are returning to New York. We ask that you fasten your seat-belts, and no smoking, please."

The stewardesses hurried about the cabin collecting plates, cups, and glasses. It may be I only imagined it, but their faces, always professionally pretty and assured, seemed tenser than those of the passengers, perhaps because they knew more about what the trouble was. In any case, we passengers too understood that a giant like a Boeing 747 cannot land just anywhere — a special runway is needed. Whether it would have been possible to land somewhere closer by, I do not know, but soon it was announced again that we were en route to New York. And so we flew for another hour and a half, back to where we had started. From time to time the plane would shudder and wheeze. It could be there was nothing out of the ordinary in that, but of course now it was given special attention.

For an hour and a half I was able to observe my fellow passengers in that unusual situation. They — or at least most of them — were Americans. I will say right away that nothing spectacular happened. They fastened their seat-belts and sat quietly in their places. They did not bother the stewardesses with too many questions, and of course the stewardesses did not share their thoughts with the passengers.

We landed safely in New York and boarded another, identical airliner together with our crew. The same baritone voice apologized for the inconvenience, and for the second time that day we took off for Los Angeles. True, some of the passengers had stayed behind in New York, having decided not to tempt fate again so soon. The woman in the seat next to me, for example, said: "That's enough for me today. I'll fly tomorrow." In fact, the airline had anticipated that some of the passengers would remain in New York. There were two registration counters open where we disembarked, one for those who wanted to go on to Los Angeles, the other for those who preferred to postpone their trip.

A few minutes after we had left New York for the second time someone in the row in front of me passed back a large sheet of paper on a cardboard backing. On it was a hand-written note of thanks to the plane's crew for having avoided an accident and for the smooth landing in New York. It was signed by all the passengers.

It might be dangerous to generalize from just one case. Still, I think my experience shows that Americans are not easily rattled. They know how to keep their wits about them. The people aboard that plane were a chance group, after all. In some degree they might be said to represent their country as a whole. Their behavior was calm and dignified. They did not panic.

The occurrence led me to some somber thoughts. Fear is a destructive emotion. When it overcomes an individual, he is deprived of what is most important — a sense of personal worth. When it overcomes a group, the characteristics of civilized society disappear. Fear has not yet poisoned the entire atmosphere in the USA, but it is growing by leaps and bounds. Americans are not a timid people, but how much can they stand?

I am not the first to notice this regrettable process. Senator George McGovern has publicly called the activization of militaristic forces in the USA a campaign to intimidate Congress and the American people. He has pointed out that there have been similar attempts in the past to spread alarm with claims that America is lagging behind militarily and talk about a "Soviet threat." After all this, asks the Senator, shouldn't Americans be more sceptical about the scare tactics currently being employed?

Unfortunately, an unambiguous, affirmative answer to this reasonable question cannot be drawn from the realities of modern American life. *Time* magazine, after a study of public opinion, wrote that just as people once believed in the coming of Doomsday, many Americans are now convinced that the destruction of Western civilization is inevitable. The sort of thing that derives — by all the norms of American life — from this conviction is truly numbing: a new and flourishing business has

been built on selling people everything from brochures giving advice on survival techniques and plots for the construction of fallout shelters to pre-packaged supplies of food sufficient to last two years. Newspaper and magazine correspondents in all parts of the country have observed that Americans are stockpiling food, looking for refuges in which to wait out the conflagrations to come, building fortified houses outside of cities, and ordering special equipment.

The "survival business" has been built on apprehension, on fear. A book giving advice to those who want to survive sold two and a half million copies in the USA. Special shelters, stocked with arms and provisions, are springing up everywhere like mushrooms. The enterprising contractors who build them and sell them to frightened Americans are doing a booming business. It should be noted that such goings-on are not a new thing. Twenty years or so back, at the height of the cold war, some 230,000 shelters were built in the USA.

Tracing the evolution of scare campaigns in the USA, we find that they are based on the myth of a Soviet threat, a myth events have disproved over and over. And nonetheless the drive to terrorize an entire nation continues unabated.

In the 50s the militaristic psychosis was spread in the USA under the device of the "bomber gap" (in comparison with the Soviet Air Force, of course). Not long afterwards the American side had to admit officially that the number of Soviet bombers had been overestimated by a factor of three or four. But by that time the job was done: the military-industrial complex had won an increase in the production of bombers.

In the 60s there was much talk of a "missilė gap" between the USA and the USSR. Once again major military programs were launched, and the arms race forged ahead into rocketry. Then came another belated acknowledgement that the Soviet "missile threat" had been exaggerated, this time by a factor of thirty.

There has been no change for the better in the 80s. The world is yet again witness to a scare campaign being conducted along the same old lines in the USA. At the focus of attention this time is a new American weapon — the neutron bomb.

And finally, the most striking example of all — the struggle between the advocates and opponents of détente over the talks to limit strategic arms. Here again the main weapon used by the forces of militarism is the lie about a Soviet threat and a Soviet superiority. The lie is now more blatant than ever, and with good reason: it is over the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty

(SALT) that the main battle between détente and militarism is being waged.

More than ten years have passed since representatives of the USSR and the USA first sat down to negotiate about limitations on strategic arms. The road has been a long one. A good many difficulties have been overcome, and a good many more remain. But the goal justifies all the efforts that have been made. It must be clear to all right-thinking people, even those remote from politics, that the real meaning of these talks comes from the need to put the brakes on today's colossal military expenditures. Mankind has grown weary of sitting on mountains of stockpiled arms, weary of pouring out its strength and its wealth to beef up nuclear arsenals. The world now has twenty-two million soldiers and sixty million people whose livelihood is connected with the military. Forty percent of everything spent on scientific research goes for military ends. Together, all these efforts mount up to sums that can only be called fantastic. More than a billion dollars is spent on our planet each day in preparing for war.

The greatest danger to mankind comes from nuclear weapons, and it is to them that the lion's share of military budgets goes. The reason is that the biggest military expenditures also bring the biggest profits to those who supply the deadly tools of war. It is they and their numerous advocates in the West who are trying to undermine the process of détente, and in particular to block the achievement of agreement on the limitation of strategic arms.

The malicious variations wrought on the theme of a "Soviet threat" have been used over and over by militarists and reactionaries to create explosive international situations. It was this bugbear that was invoked at Munich when Hitler's hands were untied. It was this same "threat" the Nazi aggressors screeched about when they attacked the Soviet Union. And it was to the accompaniment of the same sort of propaganda that NATO was founded.

Frightening the American public with an imaginary Soviet threat is likewise the main tactic used in the struggle against the limitation of strategic arms. The enemies of the SALT treaty, intentionally distorting the truth, maintain that it would benefit the USSR more than the USA and that the Soviet Union intends to achieve one-sided military advantages. This sort of dangerous and unprincipled misrepresentation is nothing new. The same claims were made in 1963 by opponents of the treaty signed by the USSR, the USA, and Britain banning nuclear tests in the

atmosphere, on the ground, and underwater, and again in 1972 against the SALT-I treaty. Many similar cases could be cited. How long will the forces of militarism in the USA be allowed to go on duping the people so shamelessly and playing with the fate of the world? How long will they continue, against all reason, to oppose any move towards peace that happens to come from the Soviet Union?

American militarists drew worldwide attention yet again with Presidential Directive 59, which proclaimed a new nuclear "doctrine." Up till then American strategists had maintained that the existence of nuclear missiles guaranteed peace by creating a "balance of terror." This meant the United States and its NATO allies needed to arm themselves — in the name of peace. The entire thrust of Presidential Directive 59 was to legitimize the use of nuclear weapons, to teach people not to shun even the thought of it. It was said that the USA should be capable of conducting a prolonged but limited nuclear war in the course of which the first targets to be destroyed would be those designated by the authors of the new doctrine as "military."

Secretary of Defense Harold Brown made a speech in which he officially formulated the new nuclear strategy and told how it had come into being. Back in 1977, it was revealed, President Carter had ordered a review of the policy under which sites in the Soviet Union were targeted for nuclear strikes. The end result was Presidential Directive 59. Brown tried to argue that it was not a first-strike strategy, but his own remarks made it clear that the Presidential Directive envisages the possibility of a "preemptive" nuclear strike. And for all the talk about a limited nuclear conflict, Brown had to admit that a controlled, selective strike might very well escalate into a full-scale nuclear war.

What lies behind all these verbal contortions is a desire to lull the public into believing such a war could be waged, and at the same time to drive the arms race onwards at any cost, by any means. The promulgation of this new doctrine was intended to win new allocations for nuclear arms, in particular for the MX and cruise missiles. The sums involved are immense. According to preliminary estimates, it will cost something between thirty million and fifty million dollars to develop the MX system.

Not only the content of the new militaristic doctrine but also the circumstances under which it was announced merit attention. The governments of the other NATO countries knew nothing about the change in the USA's nuclear strategy until the news appeared in the papers. American nuclear weapons are

based on the territories of these countries, after all. Are they to be nothing more than a launching pad for nuclear missiles? It would do America's strategy planners no harm to heed the reaction their new schemes evoked from world opinion.

The new nuclear strategy was announced at the very time when a sorrowing world was marking the thirty-fifth anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Was this only a remarkable coincidence, or was it a cynical psychological move by the authors of the new doctrine? Whichever was the case, they too probably heard the echo from the mass demonstrations in many countries around the world, whose participants demanded that the tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki never be repeated.

The Reagan administration too has made a considerable contribution to scaring the American people with the "Soviet threat." This is what George Ball, a prominent American politician, had in mind when he wrote that John Foster Dulles is alive and well and living in the White House. The well-known American historian Henry S. Commager maintains that Washington, which became a prisoner of the cold war philosophy with the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine in 1947, has decided, with the advent of Ronald Reagan, to bring its anti-communism to the boiling point. Commager writes of anti-communist frenzy, paranoid hostility towards the Soviet Union, and a willingness to flirt with nuclear war.

Reagan's predecessors in the White House — Nixon, Ford, and Carter — spoke repeatedly of the rough parity in nuclear weapons that exists between the USA and the USSR. How can things have changed so quickly in the Reagan years? American newspapers note that the new drive is remarkably similar to a number of other overestimations of Soviet military might advanced since the war, each of which has led to increased American military potential.

The militarists do not balk at even the most bald-faced lie. The operative principle is evidently that if you keep at it something is bound to stick. Think, for example, of their claims that the neutron bomb is a "humane" weapon! And where — unless he fabricated it personally — did General Kegan come up with the estimate that in a nuclear war thirty or forty Americans would die for every Russian killed? Perhaps what Kegan says could be overlooked; he is retired, and carries no official weight, so to speak. No such excuse can be offered for Richard Pipes, one of the President's top advisers, who has declared that the military doctrine of the Soviet Union is directed towards destroying American society.

How can it be that even United States officials are *permitted* to make such inflammatory statements? In traveling around the USA you see that such pronouncements have their effect: to one degree or another many Americans are already under the spell of the malevolent propaganda that the military-industrial complex is pushing with all its might. The drive is not restricted to the press and television. Many writers and film-makers also have ties to the Pentagon, as can clearly be seen from their productions.

The Pentagon today is a truly gigantic monster. Its dimensions are nothing if not awe-inspiring. The resources it commands are greater than those of America's fifteen largest joint-stock ventures and its fifteen richest industrial firms combined. Over two trillion dollars have been funneled through the Pentagon in the years since the war. More than three million service people and civilians are directly connected to it through their work. The Defense Department maintains upwards of seven hundred military bases, four hundred of them in foreign countries. This last figure speaks eloquently about the aggressive bent of American foreign policy and the danger implicit in the Pentagon's activities. A few more statistics to complete the picture. The United States maintains an army of nearly half a million, stationed in one hundred and fourteen different countries. According to the Brookings Institute, the USA resorted to armed force two hundred and fifteen times in the years from 1946 up through 1975, fought wars in Korea and Indochina, and engaged in armed intervention in Indonesia, Lebanon, and the Dominican Republic.

As indicated earlier, the US Congress — or rather four Congressional committees, two in the Senate and two in the House of Representatives — form an important link in the machinery of the military-industrial complex. These committees oversee the affairs of the armed forces and the military budget. It is they who allocate funds for arms. It would be wrong, however, to over-simplify, to leave off after considering only the Pentagon, the legislators, and the businessmen. What about the millions of Americans who work in the arms industry? Their fate depends directly on military orders, on the growth of military spending. And so militarism, like a fast-spreading cancer, disperses its poisonous seeds through every part of society.

James William Fulbright, an outstanding figure in American politics, declared that the military-industrial complex has influence not only over the United States government and the legislators on Congressional committees, over universities and centers for scientific research, but also over the broad masses and public opinion. The prodigious campaign of lies and falsification conducted by the Pentagon, Fulbright said, is entirely directed to creating the impression that militarism is a good thing for Americans and that détente does only harm.

As far back as 1961, the militarization of the USA was described in these terms:

"This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. The total influence — economic, political, even spiritual — is felt in every city, every state house, every office of the federal government." And further: "In the councils of government we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist."

That was in 1961. Today the military-industrial complex has grown to be a full-blown threat in the USA. Incidentally, the words just cited belong to Dwight D. Eisenhower; they come from the farewell address he made to America when he left the White House. And it is yet another American paradox that the founder of the military-industrial complex was none other than Eisenhower — General Eisenhower, President Eisenhower, who warned of its dangers when he retired in 1961.

It was Eisenhower who created the Department of Defense in 1953 and appointed the first Secretary of Defense, Charles Wilson. A general? An admiral? No, a businessman, the President of General Motors, one of the Pentagon's ten biggest contractors. Wilson set out the philosophical foundations of the military-industrial complex. Once, in a moment of candor during an appearance before the Senate Armed Services Committee, he said, "What's good for General Motors is good for the country."

A US Senate committee that looked into the financial affairs of corporations specializing in military production discovered that they take in profits ranging from fifty to two thousand percent.

They say you can study the ocean in a single drop of water. One of the many corporations engaged in war business in the USA is Rockwell International, which produces strategic bombers, jet fighter planes, and missiles. Its sales were $ 94 million in 1948, $ 817 million in 1955, and $ 4,943 million in 1975. Fabulous? Yes, but readily explainable: at the time of World War II an American bomber cost $ 218,000; in 1972, $ 30 million. The newest strategic bomber, the B-1, costs over $ 100 million.

The production of such "goods" yields profits that set the heads of businessmen swimming. It is hard to restrain them in their pursuit of such fantastic sums. George Kennan, the noted American diplomat and historian, has aptly compared the military-industrial complex to a dope addict.

As part of the propaganda uproar they raised in favor of building the B-1 bomber, the champions of the arms race brought out one of their best-loved lies. Rockwell International announced that the project would create twenty-five thousand new jobs. But if the funds earmarked for the B-1 were applied to some other — civilian — sector of the economy they would result in four times as many jobs. This is no exception, either, but part of an established pattern. The growth of military spending in the USA over recent years has gone hand in hand with the growth of unemployment.

The Pentagon's contractors strive to drive expenses as high as possible, thereby maximizing the subsidies paid to them. This leads to a continual rise in prices. The military sector of the US economy is the chief driving force behind inflation, as is demonstrated by example after example. General Dynamics undertook to build the Trident submarines, which carry nuclear warheads, for $ 800 million each. By the time work was finished the unit cost had risen to $ 1.2 billion. The projected cost of the atomic-powered aircraft carrier *Nimitz* was $ 685 million. The actual price eventually came to $ 1.5 billion.

General Dynamics, by the way, is one of the Pentagon's ten biggest contractors. The other leaders in this multibillion-dollar racket are McDonnel Douglas, United Technologies, Lockheed, General Electric, Litton Industries, Boeing, Hughes Aircraft, Raytheon, and Grumman. But the activities of the military-industrial complex go far beyond its dealings with these and other big corporations directly involved in military production. Many firms that might seem to have nothing to do with the war business are nonetheless closely bound to the military-industrial complex. One example is the Chrysler Corporation, which not only makes luxury cars but also receives billions of dollars in Pentagon orders for tanks and armored cars. And so the tentacles of the Pentagon, like a malignant cancer, reach out to every part of the vast US economy.

How are the billions divided up among the Pentagon's clients? There is the question of questions. No less important is who does the dividing, who decides what slice of that juicy government pie, the budget, will go to whom.

When Melvin Laird was Secretary of Defense the job of handing out contracts went to his deputy, David Packard. And who was this Packard — a general, a famed commander, a military theoretician? None of the above. He was a businessman. Before coming to the Pentagon he was head of Hewlett Packard, a company that makes electronic equipment. In those days he himself bid for Pentagon contracts. It would seem at first glance that in moving to his new firm — the Pentagon — David Packard showed a marked lack of business sense; his salary there was to be only a small fraction of what he had earned at his previous post. But the orders he obtained from the Pentagon for his old firm were beyond the wildest dreams of all the Packards before him. Curiously enough, what the Pentagon proposed to pay seemed such a trifle to Packard that he turned down all remuneration. He served for the public good, as the expression goes.

The previous Deputy Secretary of Defense was a certain Thomas Morris. He did not trouble himself with questions of military strategy, remaining a thoroughly civilian businessman. He too suffered a loss of income by leaving his old firm, Litton Industries — which incidentally increased its annual earnings from $ 180 million to $ 446 million during Morris's years in the Pentagon. Having served his term of duty in the Defense Department, Morris returned to Litton Industries, where he was made vice president.

Morris and Packard were not lonely scouts or pioneers. The road they traveled is one that has been well worn. In the past thirty years some one hundred persons have served as Secretaries of Defense; Deputy, Under, and Assistant Secretaries of Defense; Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force; Chairmen of the Atomic Energy Commission; and Directors of the Central Intelligence Agency. More than seventy of them have come from the business world. The Secretaries of Defense from 1951 to 1969, for example, were Robert A. Lovett, a New York banker; Charles E. Wilson, president of General Motors; Neil H. McElroy, head of Proctor & Gamble; Thomas S. Gates Jr., a Philadelphia banker; Robert S. McNamara, President of General Motors; and Clark M. Clifford, legal adviser to several big corporations.

Another long established tie in the cozy relationship between the Pentagon and the monopolies is the placing of retired generals and high-ranking officers in prestigious jobs with industrial corporations. In three years' time more than two thousand employees of the Defense Department left their government jobs and moved into military-related industry. The Northrop Corporation, which makes military aircraft, hired more than forty

generals, officers, and civilians formerly employed by the Department of Defense in just two years. Boeing hired over twenty, Rockwell International twenty, and Litton Industries eighteen. Douglas MacArthur and James Gavin, famous commanders during World War II, headed major corporations after their retirement from the military. Upon leaving the Army, General Alexander Haig, Supreme Allied Commander of NATO's armed forces in Europe, became President of United Technologies, one of the largest aerospace companies in the USA. His predecessor as the head of NATO's forces, Lauris Norstad, also went on to become president of a corporation.

Having traced the main outlines of the military-industrial complex, we must now stop to take a deeper look at the meaning of the term, to spell out who it really means. There is only one buyer, the Pentagon. The principal sellers are not very numerous either. The Pentagon gets most of what it needs from just a few giant corporations. It is this conjunction of a single buyer and a few big sellers that makes up the military-industrial complex. It constitutes a small and very exclusive collaborative group, a sort of military-industrial elite. Under any administration, whether Republican or Democratic, it is this elite that will control half (if not more) of the national budget of the richest country in the capitalist world. Sixty-five percent of the Pentagon's orders go to a mere one hundred corporations. The best indicator of the wealth of these shareholders in the military-industrial complex is the literally unimaginable sum the USA has spent for military purposes since the war: more than one trillion dollars. The greater part of this money has gone from the pockets of taxpayers to the coffers of the corporations listed earlier.

The fumes of militarism poison the atmosphere in the USA and inspire fear in its citizens. Again and again everyday peacetime existence is shaken by strident calls to arms and by real threats to security and peace of mind. How can people in the USA help being appalled when *U.S. News and World Report*, an undoubtedly down-to-earth magazine, asks: "Accidental War — Is It Possible?" Or consider a cartoon that appeared in one of America's leading newspapers, the *Washington Post*: in the midst of a scene of destruction, over which looms a mushroom cloud, stands a computer; its read-out tape says, "Well, nobody's perfect." The import of the ominous jest is clear. Strange to say, the Pentagon's computers grow more prone to error as their technical sophistication increases. In the course of just one week the Pentagon's electronic brain gave two false

alarms about Soviet missile attacks. Missile units, submarines, and B-52 bombers carrying nuclear warheads were put on combat alert — the planes even started their engines. Through the fault of the Pentagon, a situation resembling the initial stage of a real nuclear conflict had arisen.

Terrifying, isn't it? But it seems not everyone thinks so. The Secretary of Defense announced that such "incidents" were commonplace and no doubt would be repeated in the future. His colleague, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, remarked that nuclear alerts were even "useful" in that they served as a "warning" to the Soviet Union.

The general's logic is puzzling to say the least. It might seem no sense could be made of it at all, but the "father of cybernetics," the American mathematician Norbert Wiener, offers a clue. Not everyone in the USA believes that such "computer errors" result from technological failures. Might it not be that they are purposely incorporated into the Pentagon's programs? Norbert Wiener writes that some computer owners are "gadget worshipers." Here is how he describes their psychology:

"In addition to the motive which the gadget worshiper finds for his admiration of the machine in its freedom from the human limitations of speed and accuracy, there is one motive which it is harder to establish in any concrete case, but which must play a very considerable role nevertheless. It is the desire to avoid the personal responsibility for a dangerous or disastrous decision by placing the responsibility elsewhere: on chance, on human superiors and their policies which one cannot question, or on a mechanical device which one cannot fully understand but which has a presumed objectivity."

False alarms (of which there were something like fifty in the USA in a single year) are not the only reason for the mounting dismay and consternation in the United States. As nuclear weapons become more intricate and increase in numbers, the incidence of mishaps involving them rises steadily. Here are just two examples.

A B-52 bomber, complete with nuclear payload, caught fire on the runway of a base in North Dakota. The fire lasted for three hours, threatening the lives of tens of thousands of Americans living in the surrounding region. A few days later a Titan-2 missile equipped with a nuclear warhead exploded in its silo in the state of Arkansas. Once again a nuclear catastrophe was narrowly averted. The CBS television network

reported that the silo's metal lid and the warhead — one of the most powerful in the American nuclear arsenal — had been hurled hundreds of yards by the explosion. A considerable number of people was hurt, and the residents of a nearby town had to be evacuated. In reporting the episode the press noted that there had been one hundred and twenty-five accidents involving the Titan-2 in the past five years.

Not long ago a physics student at an American university singlehandedly put together an atomic bomb and then handed it over to the government, all to demonstrate how great the danger of an accidental nuclear catastrophe actually is. The student explained that he had manufactured the bomb without access to any secret materials, referring only to published sources available in libraries. True, the bomb was missing its radioactive payload, and comfort might be drawn from that — surely the government ought to keep such things from falling into the wrong hands. But the fact is that nuclear raw materials are stored in a most haphazard way in the United States. A concerned public demanded an official explanation in response to widespread rumors that nuclear raw materials had been disappearing from stockpiles. For two years no answer at all was forthcoming; considerations of secrecy were cited. In the end, though, it had to be admitted that twenty-five nuclear laboratories and weapons factories in the United States were missing more than four tons of uranium and plutonium — enough to make five hundred bombs, each equal in destructive power to the one dropped on Hiroshima. There is good reason for Americans — and not only them — to be concerned.

What might be called the nuclear menace from within sent yet another wave of fear through New York not long after the familiar Manhattan skyline was changed by the appearance of the World Trade Center, whose twin towers surpassed all the city's other buildings in height. New Yorkers looked at the colossus and shuddered — shuddered because of the accidental discovery of a detailed plan, complete with charts and diagrams, for constructing a special nuclear device that would destroy the trade center. This macabre document was gathering dust in the archives of a New York district court. An engineer had drawn it up and turned it over to the authorities to warn them of a possible danger. He laid special emphasis on the ease with which nuclear raw materials can be obtained in the USA, a fact we have just mentioned. It is not known whether responsible bodies heeded the warning

or not, but the grisly blueprint was carelessly set out for the perusal of each and all.

And so American society is intermittently shaken by one nuclear panic after another. The atmosphere is unhealthy, the situation dangerous and explosive.

Still, reason has not yet entirely succumbed to the virus of fear in the USA. Public opinion polls show that some eighty percent of Americans support détente, and in traveling around the United States and talking to the people you get a sense of the same thing. But this percentage is beginning to erode in the midst of the sinister and ever rising tumult of militarist propaganda in the USA. A large group of American scholars, public figures, and churchmen has brought forth a declaration of protest against the arms race being pursued by the Pentagon. The fears they express are shared by an increasing number of Americans. Convincing proof of this was provided by one of the most notable events in American life during recent years — the unprecedented peace march that took place in New York on June 12, 1982. I was living in New York at the time and witnessed both the preparations and the tremendous action itself, in which nearly one million persons spoke out against war. It produced a deep impression on the American public and evoked worldwide response. A White House spokesman blandly announced, however, that he did not know whether President Reagan had seen the march on television and said he had no comment to make on it.

Someone in the USA has calculated that today's stockpiles of nuclear arms have an explosive power equal to fifteen tons of TNT for every man, woman, and child on earth. More than anything else, this figure shows the monstrous folly of nuclear war, which could cause immeasurable affliction and suffering and bring our entire civilization to the brink of a fatal catastrophe. Meanwhile the Pentagon has embodied President Reagan's ideas in a "defense directive" for the years 1984-1988, which in essence calls for a struggle to annihilation against the Soviet Union and other socialist countries — a struggle in which all means, even nuclear arms, are to be used to attain victory.

I began my remarks on this topic with a story about what happened on a flight to Los Angeles, and how American passengers did not panic when the captain announced that the plane was in danger. But what will be the ultimate effect on Americans of the psychological pressures to which they are constantly subjected by the military-industrial complex?

That the pressure is based on lies does not make it any less dangerous. History can furnish more than a few examples of the awful destructive power a lie, blown up to gigantic dimensions, can have.

Temptation

The reason Americans have so little regard for officialdom is not only that it merely does the bidding of the power behind it — big business — but also that members of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches are all frequently embroiled in scandals over corruption, flagrant violations of the law, and outrages against public morality. Such goings-on can confidently be called one of the best established traditions of American political life. Why should this be so? Can it be that Americans are naturally more given to bribe-taking, extortion, immorality, and drunkenness than are other peoples? No, living among them would not bring anyone to such a conclusion.

Why then is corruption so widespread among those who make America's laws and those entrusted with safeguarding them? I believe the main reason is temptation. The more power an elected or appointed official has, the greater the temptation he faces. The tempters are people who have money and want to get more by illegal means. Who does this mean in practice? Anyone at all, from business to the Mafia; the only invariable is money. By the way, it is not every officeholder who waits to be enticed. Many seek out mischief on their own.

California state treasurer Jesse Unruh called money the mother's milk of politics. It is true that the making of a political figure costs a good bit, and this has to be paid back after he takes office. The higher he climbs, the more money he needs. The result is a paradox: politicians ascend a ladder leading downwards.

Corruption, it may be repeated, is nothing new in the American political world. It has rich traditions. *U. S. News and World Report* once printed a seemingly endless list of official misdeeds that had come to light in the USA within just a few months. A Mississippi state Senator was caught stealing money earmarked for education, several hundred thousand dollars in all. A Houston police chief was charged with extortion, perjury, and a number of other gross violations of the law. An Illinois sheriff was collecting protection money

from brothels. The mayor of Chester, Pennsylvania, took payoffs from gambling operations. Four aides to the governor of Tennessee were found to be trading in pardons—that is, they were releasing inmates from prisons early in return for payments. And so on and so forth. The magazine said that the cases it cited were "only a small part" of the total. In 1970, the article reported, thirty-six officeholders were indicted. That would not seem too many, but the number grew in every succeeding year, making the national total for the 70s more than 1,300. And still this is only the tip of the iceberg. It is quite difficult to bring officials before a court, and even more so to get them convicted. In most instances crimes by officeholders cause a hue and cry in the press, but the guilty parties seldom end up behind bars. If they do, moreover, they serve brief terms in comfortable conditions created especially for them.

What amazes most of all as one follows the USA's political scandals is the morality of the ruling elite, which is a peculiar thing, to say the least. Speaking, of course, from our point of view. In the United States few, I believe, find such things surprising. As for outsiders, they will be struck by the contemptible squalor uncovered, by the commotion the sensationalist press makes over it, and at the same time by the positively laughable punishments meted out (far from always, I repeat) for wrongdoing and the absence of public condemnation. Instead, the yellow press gloats over the sordid details.

Here is a classic case, so to speak, to back up these observations. Once, in the state of Maryland, there lived a politician named Spiro Agnew. He carved out a career for himself, and eventually rose to the governorship. As if that were not enough, he chanced — rather unexpectedly — into the main political arena and became Vice President of the United States under Richard Nixon. And then, when he was the number two man in the country, he was caught committing extortion. An investigation showed he had taken bribes back in his home state too, before coming to Washington. The officially uncovered extent of his ill-gotten gains amounted to over a hundred thousand dollars. How much must he have taken in altogether over the many years of his remarkable political career? He probably would not have been able to say himself. As the case unfolded Agnew was implicated in still more crimes. He was forced to resign. Then came the trial. Agnew was given a three years' suspended sentence and fined ten thousand dollars for income tax evasion. This

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was only one of the charges against him, but it was thought better to pass over the others. The reason, more or less openly acknowledged by Attorney General Elliot Richardson, was that further inquiries might drag other Washington notables into the scandal. I read the indictment made in this case, and although I am not unacquainted with the sort of thing that goes on in Washington I was astonished at what the holder of the second highest office in the USA had been up to.

I have called the lamentable case of Spiro Agnew classic not only because of the way it developed and how it ended, but also because of the man it involved. Agnew, the hero of conservative America, a champion of law and order, a warrior against the country's "enemies within," turned out to be nothing more than a common criminal. The coincidence is far from unwonted. Whenever a political scandal breaks out in the United States, you can count on finding at its epicenter a reactionary, a militarist, an ultra-patriot. And in every instance it will be someone earlier invested with high moral qualities.

What became of Agnew? I think no one in Washington has died of shame yet, and Agnew proved no exception. He received a slap on the wrist, and then sat down to writing a novel. This is already a sort of tradition in the United States. Anybody who has done wrong and suffered public disgrace for it turns to the writing of memoirs. It is something to do, and the money it brings can be quite good. And so murderers, prostitutes, gangland leaders, politicians caught taking bribes, and the like turn to belles-lettres. They usually enlist the help of ghost writers, who also make a handsome profit on such efforts. It seems likely that Agnew had this kind of help too. At any rate I can say that *The Canfield Decision* makes lively reading. It displays an insider's knowledge of the everyday workings of the White House and the cloud of intrigue hovering over it. Of particular note is the portrait of the President — a vague, mediocre, colorless personage. Vice President Canfield, the central character of the novel, is quite the opposite: intelligent and resolute, a nice fellow all round — a charmer, he might even be called. His only failing is an unfortunate knack for getting mixed up in risky schemes, and this eventually brings about his downfall. It is interesting to note that the politician-turned-author remains faithful to his old convictions. His hero is an extreme conservative, just like the Spiro Agnew America knew back in the days before he met his Waterloo.

Many American reviewers called the book one of the best of the year.

Some people in the United States might not agree with me, but I think Agnew's book would not have sold so well if its author had never suffered public disgrace. His notoriety gave impetus to his career as a man of letters. This type of *succès de scandal* is an American literary tradition. People make capital of their shame. Nobody finds it surprising.

The sensation over Agnew's novel had died away when he thrust himself once again into the limelight. In 1980, he made the sudden revelation that it was death threats from Nixon's closest associates that had forced him to resign. Why the underworld strong-arm tactics? At the time Nixon's own reputation was in mortal danger because of the Watergate affair, and once Agnew himself was accused of criminal wrongdoing his presence in the administration became another source of embarrassment the President could do very well without. Agnew stepped down (for fear of his life, he now says), but Nixon was no better off. Not long afterwards he too was forced to resign because of flagrant violations of the law committed while holding the highest office in the land. The details of the Watergate affair are well known. The mainspring, as in Agnew's novel, was the struggle for power, in this case for the White House. Agnew did not have to go far for subject material!

Having tried his hand at fiction, Agnew brought out his memoirs, which is where he told of how he had been coerced into resigning the vice presidency. It is curious that another sensation rocked the USA almost at the same time as Agnew's revelation. Gordon Liddy, one of the men who had broken into Democratic Party headquarters (which was how the scandal that finally lead to Nixon's downfall began), divulged other, even more astonishing, White House secrets.

Liddy, a former FBI agent, was a professional master of the dirty trick. At the time of the break-in he was a financial counsel to the Republican campaign committee; earlier, during Nixon's first term, he had been a member of the White House staff. Liddy and the others directly involved in the break-in were put on trial. None of them told the whole truth about the affair, but in the course of the investigation and during the trial itself all the others broke down and told a few facts. Not Liddy! Before testifying to the Ervin (Watergate) Committee he was asked to take the usual oath: "Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so

help you God?" Liddy replied, "No." He eventually received a jail sentence. Can you guess what he occupied himself with while he was doing his time? Literary endeavor, of course. He began writing his memoirs, which were published around the same time as Agnew's. The title Liddy chose was short but compelling: *Will*. After his long years of stubborn silence about Watergate he finally opened up with a vengeance. What goings-on behind the stately walls of the White House he had to tell of!

Chuck Colson, Special Counsel to the President, had been one of Nixon's closest associates. And it was Colson who once entrusted Liddy and Howard Hunt (a CIA agent on the White House staff who "specialized" in the same line of work) with the task of murdering Jack Anderson, a columnist famous for his muckraking. It was thought at the White House that Anderson had gone too far; the stories he was uncovering were a serious threat to many important people. Together with Hunt and a CIA operative working under the name of George Leonard, Liddy looked into several ways of getting rid of the vexatious journalist: poisoning, arranging an automobile accident, shooting. All of these options were described to Colson (Special Counsel to the President!), though none of them was actually carried out, possibly because the Watergate scandal had begun to break. Hunt and Colson were now implicated too; there was no more time for plotting against Anderson.

So no murder was committed. But as soon as *Will* came off the presses the ABC television network arranged a meeting between Anderson and Liddy, the man who had planned to kill him. Millions of viewers across America saw the two shake hands and chat pleasantly. Incredible? Yes, to us, but not from the American point of view. A television interviewer, exclaimed: "This is a real American saga!"

Liddy also tells in his book how he planned to kill Hunt when he found out that his former colleague had decided to "come clean" about his crimes related to the Watergate affair. And this is not all. He writes that he was even ready to do away with himself after things went wrong. He says he told White House aide John Dean: "Look, John. I said I was the captain of the ship when she hit the reef and I'm prepared to go down with it. If someone wants to shoot me just tell me what corner to stand on and I'll be there, O. K.?"

This all sounds monstrous to a normal person, but to someone like Gordon Liddy it was perfectly logical. He himself tells us

in his book: "I learned to kill a man with no more than a pencil; to maim; to blind."

Why, though, did Liddy, a true professional, a man seemingly created after the model of the famed cinematic secret agent James Bond, finally tell all? He explains that his fellow conspirators had already received their just desserts; his revelations could no longer jeopardize anyone. He also felt that he owed a debt to history — lofty sentiment in a hired killer and *agent provocateur*! Finally, he was in debt. He had been fined $40,000 in addition to his prison sentence, and owed his lawyers some $300,000 more. There was nothing for it but to write his memoirs. Here are a few episodes from the book.

Liddy describes a meeting between himself and US Attorney General John Mitchell. Also present were two of President Nixon's closest aides, Jeb Stuart Magruder and John Dean. They talked about using terrorist tactics against their political enemies from the rival Democratic Party. Liddy proposed some drastic methods: kidnapping, blackmail, entrapment, smear campaigns, and the like. In the course of his remarks he mentioned a "special action group" he had brought together.

"What's that?" asked Mitchell.

Liddy explained:

"These men include professional killers who have accounted between them for 22 dead so far, including two hanged from a beam in a garage."

Mitchell was satisfied with this reply, and Liddy went on with his exposition. Among other things, he proposed that leading figures in the Democratic Party be compromised during their upcoming convention in a beach resort city.

"For use in gathering information at the Democratic National Convention in Miami Beach, Hunt and I had an option to lease a large houseboat moored within line of sight of the Fontainebleau. This would enable it to be used as a communications center for CRYSTAL-electronic surveillance. With a lush bedroom featuring a large mirror over the big king-sized bed, the houseboat would double as headquarters for SAPPHIRE because it was from there that our prostitutes were to operate. They were not to work as hookers but as spoiled, rich, beautiful women who were only too susceptible to men who could brag convincingly of the importance of what they were doing at the convention. The bedroom would be wired for sound."

Another excerpt from Liddy's book:

"On Thursday, 15 June, I went to the meeting with Mitchell.

At one point, I told him: "General [Attorney General — *Ed.*], we've identified the exact suite McGovern's going to be using during the convention, and we've got a little surprise cooked up for him. Just as the press arrives for one of his interviews, we're gonna have a bunch of really filthy zonked-out hippies swarm in there, all wearing McGovern buttons and carrying his signs. Then, just as the television and press get their cameras going, and with McGovern standing there, helpless, every dirty hippie is gonna whip it out and take a leak, right there in front of everybody.'"

This scheme patently borders on the idiotic, but Liddy, at his masters' orders, was ready to try anything to descredit their political rivals. Here is how he describes the way he recruited a woman named Sherry Stevens into his band of thugs and dirty tricksters:

"She was flashily good-looking, young, had secretarial skills and experience, and appeared able to attract men sexually if she wished. At dinner Miss Stevens seemed reluctant, and when I told her that her identity would be revealed to no one, she pointed out that I would know her identity. I told her that no one could force me to disclose anything I chose not to reveal. She didn't believe me. I told her to light her cigarette lighter and hold it out. She did and I placed my hand, palm down, over the flame. Presently the flesh turned black and when she smelled the scent of burning meat, Sherry Stevens pulled the lighter away from my hand. Pale, Miss Stevens said she was sure I would never betray her."

Liddy writes about how he built character in himself as a boy:

"Tommy [the family cat] left a dead rat on the kitchen steps and I found it. The carcass was still warm and remarkably undamaged. To demonstrate to myself my lack of fear ... I picked it up with my hands.... For the next hour, I roasted the dead rat. With a scout knife I skinned, then cut off and ate the roasted haunches of the rat. The meat was tasteless and stringy."

Here is what Liddy has to say about whose influence shaped his outlook on life:

"We had a maid. Her name was Teresa. She was a German national. I loved her. Teresa's country had been, she said, in deep trouble. Now, however, a wonderful man had risen from the people and was solving all their problems. One day Teresa was excited. He was going to be on the radio. Eagerly, I joined her. We could tell when he was about to speak.

The crowd hailed him in huge swelling ovations. 'Sieg!' someone would shout, and what seemed like all the people in the world would answer with a roar, 'Heil!' For he was their leader, der Führer, Adolf Hitler. When I spoke of this man to my father, he became angry. Adolf Hitler, he said, was an evil man who would loose upon the world all the destruction of war. I was to stop listening to him. I continued to listen."

This completes the portrait of a typical American secret agent, whose doings became known to the public only through chance. An agent who had the ear of the Attorney General and of the closest advisers of the President of the United States!

Several years later the Watergate affair produced yet another sensational revelation. It was learned that President Nixon, finding himself in financial difficulties, had appealed for help to the American Mafia, to the gangland syndicate Cosa Nostra. The Watergate burglars (Hunt, Liddy, and others) were demanding a million dollars in return for their silence before the court. Cash was needed, and quickly. Nixon, through his legal counsel John Dean, asked the Cosa Nostra for the money — and got it! It has now been officially established that in 1973 underworld boss Tony Provenzano handed over $500,000 to a special White House courier. Nixon got $500,000 more from another gangland leader, Allen Dorfman. These facts, which stunned even the American public, came to light only after painstaking study of the tapes recorded in the Nixon White House. When the Watergate scandal began, portions of these tapes were destroyed or erased, although some four thousand hours of them survived for posterity. In one of the taped conversations between Nixon and Dean, Nixon's voice says: "What I mean is you could get a million dollars. And you could get it in cash. I know where it could be gotten." During the inquiries into the Watergate affair this remark was not properly understood; its meaning became clear only later, during the investigation of a different case, the murder of Jimmy Hoffa (who was both a union boss and an underworld leader) by the Mafia.

So it was Nixon's extreme suspiciousness, his desire to have everything on tape, that undid him and led to the discovery of yet another White House secret. It can only be called a terrible secret, even though it comes as no news that politicians in the USA are tempted not only by business but also by the Mafia. The relationship between politics and organized crime has been shown in many scandals. Under Nixon, the White

House too entered into this shocking and ominous partnership.

Many instances of the unhallowed union between those who make the laws and those who break them can be drawn from the American press. In 1980 the *Washington Post* reported on an investigation stemming from charges that Senators Howard Cannon and Birch Bayh had taken bribes from Cosa Nostra bosses. The same year, the *Los Angeles Times* wrote that a large group of political and union leaders in several states had been linked to organized crime.

The scope of political corruption grows with every passing year. One of the milestones in this progression was the wholesale temptation of members of Congress organized by none other than the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The FBI's job is fighting crime and political unorthodoxy, but I think it had reasons of its own for setting traps for members of Congress. In recent years pressure from the public has brought some usually secret sides of the FBI's activities under critical fire. The FBI, it seems, has broken laws, infringed upon citizens' rights, maintained connections with organized crime, and the like. Congress was forced to look into these highly irregular goings-on, and apparently FBI agents were so stung that they decided to seek revenge and at the same time show everyone that it could lead to no good to provoke them. They laid their plans unhurriedly, meticulously, and then acted on them.

The scandal broke in 1980. Two years earlier, an enormously rich Arabian sheik — an oil magnate, more accurately — had appeared on the Washington horizon. His name was Abdul Rahman, and black gold had brought him untold wealth. Such, at any rate, was the official story. He set up his own firm in the USA, Abdul Enterprises, and lived in the grand style. He made no particular secret of his need for powerful political supporters to help along his business in America. Soon politicians were beating a path to his door. The sheik was a splendid host. He had already acquired a yacht and several houses. He put on feasts and staked large sums on roulette. With the help of his new-found American friends his affairs prospered. He received many profitable contracts, including orders from the military.

The lawmakers pressing in on Abdul Rahman from all sides were eager to do him favors — for a price, of course. It appears he not only plied them with food, drink, and every conceivable luxury besides, but also paid them fabulous bribes for their services. And everything would have gone along as cozy as you please, if it were not that every time

cash was handed over to a bribe-taker the transaction was being secretly tape-recorded and photographed with television cameras by FBI agents. The head of the operation was the sheik himself. And so a group of Washington lawmakers was snared in the FBI's nets in revenge for the dishonor that had been brought upon the bureau.

Mark Twain once said that America has no peculiarly criminal class — unless you count Congress. In our days this thesis has been borne out at some length in the book *Wheeling and Dealing. Confessions of a Capitol Hill Operator*. Its author is Bobby Baker, whose knowledge of Congress and Washington's political machinations few Americans have ever matched. He started at the bottom, as a message boy in the Senate, and rose to the high post of secretary to the Democratic majority in the Senate. Such was his influence that he was dubbed "the hundred-and-first Senator." (The Senate has one hundred members in all.) While Baker was still a youngster running errands he was taken under the wing of Lyndon Johnson, who later became President of the United States. Robert Carr, another highly influential Senator, also made Baker his protégé. On his way to the top Baker had caught on to how the political machine operates. Once he had made it he began to enrich himself, peddling his influence to anyone who wanted something from the Senate. In just a few years he had raked in two million dollars — and this is a minimum figure, reflecting what was officially established during the subsequent investigation.

Interestingly enough, Baker not only helped the Senators conduct their business but also served as a sort of social chairman for them. He bought a sumptuous house (the Senators probably chipped in to help pay for it) where the legislators could enjoy their leisure time, drink, and womanize. It was as a result of one of the orgies at the Quorum Club, as this institution was wittily named, that the exposure of the "hundred-and-first Senator" began. After a lengthy investigation he was sent to jail, but in hardly any time at all he was out again, safe and sound, and published a book.

The yellow press had a field day with the Baker case, savoring all the piquant details of how the Senators disported themselves at the Quorum Club. The spotlight often falls on this side of the behind-the-scenes life of lawmakers; government dignitaries are forever getting caught at the most undignified antics. Here is just one example.

For almost thirty years Wayne Hays was a member of the

House of Representatives, where he held responsible posts and served in the Democratic leadership. He was always noted as a champion of strict morality. As Chairman of the House Administrative Committee he kept a sharp eye on everything. Behind his back people called him a petty tyrant, and Hays himself admitted he was not easy to get along with. And then this moralist, this stickler for the letter of the law, was suddenly thrust before the public in another role altogether.

His friend and colleague Congressman Kenneth Gray retired, leaving Hays his secretary and mistress, Elizabeth Ray. She was a spirited young woman, and certainly no prude — she was on intimate terms with several other members of Congress as well. It should be said that Hays was something of a philanderer himself. He was also involved with another of his co-workers. Things went so far between them that Hays eventually divorced his wife and married her. That was too much for Elizabeth Ray. She voiced her anger publicly, to reporters from the *Washington Post*. She told them not only about herself and Hays but also about other aides on the Congressional payroll whose main job was keeping legislators happy. She said she had tapes of her intimate meetings with Hays and other members of Congress (the tape recorder had been hidden under her bed), and also of the sweet nothings she had traded with them over the telephone. Another scandal swept Capitol Hill, and of course Elizabeth Ray wrote a book and included in it everything she had seen in Congress.

What do Americans think about such shenanigans? The famed Public Opinion Institute headed by Louis Harris once asked Americans how different groups of public and political figures stood in their regard. Members of Congress were ranked eighth — in third to last place. The only groups less esteemed were those who run monopolies and the top leadership of the AFL-CIO labor organization. The Behavior Research Center, another polling service, found that forty percent of Americans believe Congressmen take bribes. More than half of those surveyed thought Washington legislators abused their official positions for personal gain and other purposes. Such an opinion of the "chosen representatives of the people" naturally has a negative effect on the country's social climate, if for no other reason than that bad example is infectious.

Temptation is not the fate of legislators alone. The same sort of thing goes on at all levels of the executive and judicial branches as well. What is more, many come to high office already thoroughly corrupt, as can be seen from the case of

banker Bert Lance, one of President Carter's fellow Georgians. Carter took over at the White House amidst promises to put America's finances in order, and in particular to end inflation. He asked his friend Lance to come to Washington and help, appointing him director of the Office of Management and Budget. The move was widely heralded, and everyone was expecting Lance to work wonders. Instead, he became the focus of yet another scandal. The President's best friend turned out to be a sharp dealer. Back in Georgia he had not only loaned money to Carter on preferential terms but also engaged in illegal financial operations. Carter made considerable efforts to disperse the gathering storm, but to no avail. Lance had to resign and stand trial. True, American justice did not let the government down this time too; Lance got off with no more than the usual public disgrace (or rather, sensationalist brouhaha).

Carter also had bad luck with his Secretary of the Treasury, G. William Miller, who had previously headed a corporation that sold helicopters on both domestic and foreign markets. It was learned that under Miller's leadership the firm had spent millions of dollars to buy political influence in the USA and abroad. This is indeed common practice among American businessmen, whose venality rivals that of the politicians.

It was not so very long ago that the Lockheed Corporation, which makes ballistic missiles, military aircraft, and electronic equipment, was discovered to have engaged in similar machinations. Lockheed is the Pentagon's second largest contractor; its aircraft and other military hardware are sold in thirty-seven countries. It seems Lockheed was handing over money to politicians in the USA and elsewhere in return for their favors. Tens of millions went for bribes, but in return Lockheed was awarded contracts worth hundreds of millions. The exposé shook the whole Western political world. It forced Prime Minister Tanaka of Japan to resign and was one of the reasons Italian President Giovanni Leone decided to step down. Lockheed paid twelve million dollars to the Christian Social Union Party of West Germany to ensure the sale of its Starfighter planes. (Later, when the fighters began to crash one after the other, they were nicknamed "flying coffins.")

The American press reports that four hundred and fifty of the USA's leading firms use similar tactics to sell their products. *U. S. News and World Report*, a business oriented magazine, estimates that each year American businessmen

hand out thirteen billion dollars in bribes. "The extent of bribes, kickbacks and payoffs is best described by one word — pervasive," says the magazine. "The ethically run company is at a severe disadvantage if it has to compete for business against firms that achieve an 'edge' through bribery." Yes, when you live in Rome you must do as the Romans do! The Harris pool mentioned above found that only twenty percent of Americans have faith in the honesty of big business leaders.

Earlier in this discussion of temptation and tempters we had occasion to speak of Spiro Agnew, extortioner and former Vice President of the United States. His home state of Maryland has given the USA a fair number of other high-placed gougers too. Could it be that some peculiar type of bacillus infects the air of Maryland? Is there something special about the state? Not at all — Maryland is no different from any of the other states.

Why, though, are the high and mighty in the USA (and this includes those in the White House) so given to corruption? Probably the main reason is that each administration is principally concerned with ways to make money (for itself, of course, to be used in its own narrow interests). Let us take the Reagan administration as a case in point. Of its one hundred top officials, no less than twenty-five are millionaires. Among this number are Vice President George Bush, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, Secretary of the Treasury Donald Regan, and Attorney General William Smith. The other members of the inner circle have incomes in the hundreds of thousands. When Donald Regan left Merrill Lynch to accept the modestly paid (in comparison with his own millions) post of Secretary of the Treasury, the company, knowing the hardship to which he was condemning himself, paid him a termination bonus of $400,000. No wonder Regan became one of the chief implementers of the President's economic policy, which is designed to make the poor poorer and the rich richer. The so-called new tax policies of Reagan and Regan have already brought corporations fat profits while depriving millions of needy Americans of government help.

The Reagan administration's Under Secretary for Research and Engineering in the Department of Defense is Richard DeLauer, formerly vice president of TRW, Inc., one of the USA's biggest weapons firms and the chief contractor working on the MX missile system. If anyone can ensure lucrative orders for TRW and other arms manufacturers, Mr. DeLauer

will! He is not interested in détente, and why should he be? The American press notes that the Reagan administration has rained down multi-billion dollar orders on the military-industrial complex in a shower of gold.

Wherever you look among the "Reagan hundred" you see the same thing: people making money by operating the political machinery in their control. The Director of the Office of Surface Mining, for instance, is James Harris. It is his job to prevent the depletion of natural resources and combat pollution of the environment. That is to say he is the one who is supposed to stand up to the mining companies. It so happens, however, that Harris is a major stockholder in these very companies. Representative Morris Udall saw the implications: "Putting someone like Harris in charge of the strip mining program," he commented, "is like putting Dracula in charge of the blood bank."

The Reagan administration appointed John Crowell to the Department of Agriculture as Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources and the Environment. Among his duties there is seeing to the protection of America's forest lands. Crowell came to the post directly from the lumber industry. "A perfect example of letting the fox guard the henhouse," is how Peter Kirby of the Wilderness Society described the appointment.

The same principle has been followed by the Reagan administration in filling top posts in all fields. The Reverend William Coffin, one of America's most noted religious leaders, has drawn attention to Reagan's choice of representatives to international negotiations. Eugene Rostow, Paul Nitze, and Edward Rowny have always stood for a hard-line policy conducted from a position of strength. In their view America needs to arm itself to the teeth first; after that the other side can be bullied into making concessions. It seems more than likely that these politicians would like to bring the Geneva and Vienna talks to a standstill. Even those officially charged with reducing international tensions are thus marching to the same drummer as are the militarists — the drummer of even greater profits for the military-industrial complex.

As government diverts its resources away from the "have nots" and towards the "haves" the virus of lawlessness spreads rapidly. This is why all administrations are highly susceptible to corruption. A signed article published in *U. S. News and World Report* under the title "A Nation of Thieves?" offers an opinion frequently to be heard in the USA: "The biggest thief is our federal government. The pattern is established there."

A *New York Times* article titled "Private Wealth and Public Service" pointed out that "the Reagan Administration, more so than any other in recent memory, is dominated by wealthy businessmen and millionaires... This concentration of wealth at the top has contributed to an unusual situation in which more than a dozen high-level members of the Administration have been the subject of public questions about their personal financial dealings or about possible conflicts of interest between their official responsibility and their private holdings... A large number of Reagan appointees come from the industries they regulate, including those with ties to mining, forestry, trucking, securities, commodities futures, nuclear, drug, banking, oil, cattle and broadcasting industries."

Behind this highly streamlined acknowledgment lies a morass of abuses and lawlessness in which everybody scrambles to grab all he can and at the same time seeks to enrich those he represents, the people who put him into office. And so one scandal follows on the heels of another, the common denominator in all of them being corruption.

The Reagan administration was still in its infancy when one of the President's closest associates — Richard Allen, his National Security Adviser — was caught taking bribes. Try as the White House might to save him, Allen was forced to resign. CIA chief William Casey was discovered to be involved in shady dealings on the stock market. Think of the opportunity he had: he owned shares in twenty-seven corporations, and secret government channels provided him with a steady supply of information that could be used in business as well as intelligence work. Here is a fruitful field indeed for the study of possible conflict of interest!

Predictable Paradoxes

The vast expanses of the USA, its kaleidoscopically varied population, its social system, which is diametrically opposed to our own, and also a path of historical development quite unlike ours, a different tenor of life (morals, everyday living, customs) — all of these contribute to the curious fact that the more you learn about America the more questions it confronts you with. Much seems strange at the first face-to-face encounter, but long years of personal observation provide ever more food for thought. In getting to know the USA you come to understand the meaning of the dictum, "I know that I know

nothing". At the same time it is just as hard — if not more so — for an American to get to know our country. Americans know far less about the Soviet Union that we do about the USA, and the information they do have is often distorted.

It seems to me that the difficulty we have in understanding one another is one of the main reasons underlying the many obstacles encountered in trying to establish Soviet-American contacts of various kinds. The only way these obstacles can be overcome is to observe with an open mind. When something seems puzzling it must be given our full attention. Getting impatient can do no good. And most of all we must not be hasty with conclusions.

America presents so many paradoxes that I hardly know which to take up first in illustration of the thoughts just expressed. There are, for instance, youth and age — two extremes, the first and last phases of conscious human life. Let us take a look at the fortunate ones in each group, young people setting out on their own but still receiving help from their parents, and older people retired on pensions. Neither group finds itself in an extreme situation. Their circumstances are quite ordinary and do not evoke any kind of distress. If I were asked how I personally see these two segments of the American population as they stand now, I would have to say that on the whole the old people are more assured, happier, and more active than the youngsters. Strange, isn't it? Still, I think my opinion is well founded.

I have known many Americans, both old and young. I once made a trip around the country with five American students in two cars. Another time I traveled in the company of retired people, each of whom passed me along to the next. I have lived in student dormitories, and been the guest of people far advanced in years. Finally, I myself first got acquainted with the USA many years ago, when still a young man. Back then I talked with young people on an equal footing; now I can do the same with mature and older people. Why is it that the latter, as it seems to me, have more zest than their grandchildren? The reasons are many. They are rooted, of course, in the American way of life, which is the subject of this book. It would probably be impossible to trace them all. Where to begin, then?

It seems appropriate to begin with competition. Competition is a fact of American life, and a rather harsh one too. Competition in everything — selection, choice. At seventeen or eighteen, when a young person is preparing to cross the threshold from childhood into adult life, it is impossible not to be a little

dismayed by the difficulties of living in a society where everyone must stand for himself against all the rest. Unemployment in America is most severe among the young, and the crime rate among them is higher than in any other group. To these and other similar factors there must be added the uncertainty and inexperience of the young and the confused emotions that trouble them.

For the older people all that is already in the past. They have survived, overcome the difficulties, reached an honorable old age. Many have even managed to put something aside for their retirement. There is no more reason for restlessness or doubt. Everything in their lives has been decided already. Another thing that should not be overlooked is that the brisk and steady pace of the years they have spent at their jobs has kept them from really relaxing, putting day-to-day concerns out of mind, and taking a look around them. A job is nothing to be trifled with in the USA; it has to be valued and cherished. You have to keep your nose to the grindstone! Then comes retirement and with it unlimited leisure time. All the unspent curiosity overflows. People want to travel, to see things, to understand what is going on around them and talk it over. Their hunger for experience is insatiable. I think of the time that I, a guest from abroad, was passed from one host to another like the baton in a relay race. Retired people all over the USA have organized themselves into reception committees for foreign visitors. They put guests up for a day or two and drive them around in their cars, telling them things, showing them around, explaining. Then they pass them along to other hosts on the committee who live in a different city or town. I once traveled several thousand kilometers this way and was most impressed with the virtues of the system. It is based on curiosity, on the hunger for meeting new people and learning new things. A foreigner, and from Red Russia at that! I was the first real live Soviet the majority of my hosts had ever laid eyes on.

To get a piece of the American pie you need strong shoulders and sharp elbows. The older people don't have to push and shove any more. Those who have gotten a share are satisfied. Young people still have to prove themselves in the trial of wits. No one invites them graciously to the table — not society, not their relations. It is not traditional in America, as it is in our country, for parents to help their children along until they are about thirty, or even older. So young people in the USA have more than their share of worries. This is why they seem more

anxious than their elders. An interesting detail: the 1980 census showed that the number of Americans fourteen years of age and under had declined by fourteen percent over the past decade, while the number of those over sixty-five had increased by twenty-four percent.

One of the memories of the now distant years of my childhood is a sort of swing I often saw at country houses outside the city. A big board would be hung from the trees on very long ropes. Two or even four children (a pair at either end) would stand on it and make it swoop through the air so that it took your breath away just to look at them. I was unexpectedly reminded of those swings when I was in the USA by the contrasts in so much of what I saw there, the swoops from one extreme to the other.

At Disneyland I was simply overwhelmed. Several days are needed just to take in all its attractions. It is a fairy-tale land created with the aid of the latest word in science and technology; its wonders of electronics and feats of engineering are a match for all the other prodigies the modern world can offer. Here are just a few examples.

Disneyland has its own jungles. You can take a voyage down a tropical river in a motor boat. The lush greenery is real; a fair semblance of a jungle can be grown in the benign climate of southern California. But all the varied fauna of this equatorial corner of Disneyland is the cunning creation of human hands and mind.

A family of hippopotamuses emerges suddenly from under the water. Like all the other animals here, they are, life-sized. Their jaws gape cavernously. Then, seeing the boat, they sink back under the surface. Crocodiles, each several meters long, doze at the water's edge. Monkeys gambol on the trees nearby. Further downstream a large herd of elephants has stopped for a drink. There are huge mammas and papas and their numerous offspring. They are enjoying the water; a merry fountain squirts from many trunks. On another sloping bank graceful zebras are slaking their thirst. A cliff overhangs the river, and in one of its lofty caves a family of lions has set up housekeeping. All these creatures move as if alive and emit growls and all their various cries. They look like the real thing in every respect. I took several photographs, and it would be impossible to tell them apart from the trophies of a real camera safari.

Then there is the land of the pirates. A boat takes you into a cave where various adventures await. A castle appears on the left; on the right are the pirate ships besieging it. Canon balls

fly back and forth. Many of them fall hissing into the surrounding water. The battle is in full swing. Life-sized pirates and defenders rush back and forth, shouting.

In the next cave another vignette appears. The pirates are making merry in the captured castle. The wine flows like water, and everywhere there is drunken revelry, singing, and dancing. Some unfortunate fellow is being hoisted up to a gallows. Just a little ways away female captives are being auctioned off. The boat moves on, and we see the pirates' booty heaped up beside the shore. Near the end of the voyage we pass near a prison; pirates languish in the cells.

In another corner of this magic land you can fly over the rooftops of a city, just like Peter Pan. There is an enormous, fantastically shaped building where you can take off on a flight into space, see the stars right up close and even undergo some of the stresses astronauts are subject to. At concert given in a fairy-tale theater you can learn something about the history of the popular song in America. All the performers are birds; they strut up and down, sing, and talk to the audience. If you are not easily frightened you can visit a haunted house. Here the creative imagination of the inventors has surpassed all bounds. The specters would be really terrifying if you did not know ahead of time that they are only amusement-park phantoms. You can take a ride around Disneyland in a train drawn by an old-time locomotive or on a monorail of the most advanced design, or go on a submarine voyage. In short, a mere enumeration of the things to see and do would fill several pages.

Children are overjoyed, and adults are taken back to the world of childhood. A magic atmosphere reigns in the magic world of Disneyland; I am convinced that it makes people more kindly. No doubt specialists could say quite a bit about the educational value Disneyland has, in addition to its entertainment value. I have no doubt Disneyland does an enormous amount of good. But there are other kinds of educational forces operating in the USA too.

Returning from Disneyland to the real world of America, I chanced to discover that in New York it is possible to buy a children's playset called Torture. Dolls in masks tighten an iron ring around the head of their victim, shove needles under her fingernails, and burn her flesh with red-hot irons. The instructions invite children to invent new tortures on their own. The Aurora Products Corporation, which manufactures the kit, says it is intended for children from eight to twelve. Another firm even puts out "blood" for children's games. It looks just

like real blood, and will even congeal to form a crust on the skin.

Now another paradox, from an entirely different field. It is well known that the USA is a nation on wheels, with nearly 120 million passenger cars on the road. People use cars to go to work and school, to make shopping trips and holiday outings. Without getting out of his car an American can also have a meal, withdraw money from the bank, attend church services, and even (in a specially built funeral parlor) pay his last respects to the departed. There is no denying that all this is very convenient. What is more, America has excellent highways, with plenty of garages for repairs, filling stations, and motels. These are the pluses, so to speak. The principal minus is that life in the USA is virtually impossible without a car. It has become a necessity of life, if only because it lays waste to urban mass-transport systems, which continue to scrape along in some cities but are rapidly dying out in others. Most Americans can only get to their place of work by car, and so owning a car is a necessary condition for having a job. But what about those who cannot afford a car? They are up against a simple equation: no car, no job. For another thing, the pace of traffic in big cities is so slow that pedestrians make better time. And this is still only the beginning.

I have made a number of visits to Los Angeles, one of the largest cities in the USA and in my opinion one of the most astonishing. Los Angeles is where the automobile really comes into its own. The city's population is given as approximately three million, but this represents only the downtown area, which is more a ramified system of highways than an inhabited district. There is no city as we know it; only a network of highways and their endless interchanges. Buildings huddle abjectly by the roadsides, scattered in countless residential islets joined by highways. There are no subway stations, no trolleys, no trams. A handfull of buses does little to solve the transportation problems of those who do not have their own "wheels." And it has been calculated that the average resident of Los Angeles travels thirty miles — almost fifty kilometers — to his job.

The vast herds of automobiles that throng the city, especially at rush hours, fill the air with smog — poisonous exhaust fumes — which often hangs in the air for days on end. The result, given the semi-tropical climate, is horrific. When smog blankets the Los Angeles skies there is a sharp increase in the rate of disease; people with heart troubles, high blood pressure,

asthma, and tuberculosis suffer especially. There have been times when the local authorities have gone beyond warning that the air condition is hazardous to health and declared that it threatens the city with disaster. One professor of meteorology has recommended that Angelenos wear gas masks; he maintains that if the air continues to be poisoned with exhaust fumes the city's population will begin to die out.

The same problems confront other large American cities in varying degrees. Furthermore, not all of the plagues that come from total dependance on the automobile are readily visible. It is a generally accepted principle that social being determines consciousness. Thus in many respects the automobile determines the consciousness of Americans.

The automobile and the American character, the automobile and the American world view, the automobile and family life in the USA, the automobile and the younger generation, the automobile and morality, the automobile and health, the automobile and crime, the automobile and public life — this is only the start of a long list of possible topics for serious research into how a machine with the power of three or four hundred horses has become more of an enemy than a friend to the American people. There is nothing fatal about the automobile as such, however. It is entirely in the hands of man, and man is responsible for turning it into a monster.

The manufacture and servicing of automobiles and the sale of fuel for them is a big business in America. The profits it brings in are immense. When one considers the tangled intricacies of the USA's "automotive problems" from this angle, everything suddenly becomes clear. As long as the money keeps rolling in, nothing worries the businessmen. In fact they do not hesitate to increase their profits by saddling their fellow-countrymen with even more difficulties. Suffice it to recall the "energy crisis" of a few years back, which later, when the public came to realize what had happened, was renamed the "energy hoax." How strange it all seemed at first! I was amazed to see lines of cars at American filling stations and signs at many others that read: "Sorry, no gas." No gas! In the USA that is almost the same thing as no air. The shortage naturally brought higher prices. Afterwards it was discovered that the oil companies had made a killing on the so-called energy crisis. What did they care about the hardships it caused? The farce was so transparent that a public opinion poll showed seventy-seven percent of Americans did not believe an energy crisis actually existed at all.

Yes, the USA is a vast and contradictory land, and such curiosities are encountered at every turn. There is no need to go far afield for examples. We have already mentioned Los Angeles — the largest city in California, which is probably the richest and most flourishing of the fifty states. It is a pure pleasure to race along the freeways that cut through the verdant hills and emerge onto the enchantingly lovely ocean beaches. A blessed land — or so it might seem. Many of America's largest corporations and banks have headquarters here. There is also an abundance of mineral resources. At the same time, California has more crime than any other state, more suicides, mental illness, divorces, bankruptcies, alcoholics, homosexuals, drug addicts, and tuberculars. Obviously the free enterprise system is injurious to human life, even in a heavenly climate.

Speaking of climate, the automobile-generated smog of Los Angeles is a highly characteristic fact of American life. The capitalist system is at odds with everything that lives — even with nature itself! I took an interest in the problem of environmental protection in the United States, visited research centers and talked with experts. To be fair, it should also be mentioned that the USA has many national and state parks remarkable for their size and natural wonders. I learned, however, the problem of how to preserve and protect nature is more acute in the USA than anywhere else. American industry produces something like half of all the pollutants released into the earth's atmosphere and water systems. It might be thought that this is due simply to the USA's industrial strength, but this is not at all the case. Barry Commoner, an American researcher, has proven in a study covering a twenty-five year period that air, water, and soil pollution in the USA result not so much from the growth of production as from the monopolies' greed for profit. The sad consequences of that greed can be seen everywhere in the USA. A quarter of a century ago, when I made my first trip to the Great Lakes (at the border between the USA and Canada), I heard nothing at all about any danger facing them. By the 70s they had been nearly devastated as a result of the dumping of industrial wastes. People were saying that Lake Erie was dead.

Time magazine warns that in the 80s the United States will come up against the dire consequences of letting chemical byproducts in vast quantities escape into its soil and water. Millions upon millions of tons of wastes are produced, *Time* writes, but only ten percent are rendered harmless through

proper treatment. The rest poison the soil and water, killing all the organisms that live there. The magazine notes that the companies responsible for this crime are unwilling to bear the expense of proper waste disposal. The facts and figures *Time* cites would frighten any reader. More than a hundred bodies of water in the picturesque forests of the New Jersey Pine Barrens have been poisoned with industrial wastes. Twenty-two towns in Massachusetts and three hundred in Michigan are faced with the same problem, as is also the city of Minneapolis. People living in the vicinity of the Love Canal (in New York state) suffered an incidence of cancer, birth defects, respiratory disease, and nervous ailments far higher than the national average. Studies were conducted, and it was learned that the local water supply was contaminated with poisonous byproducts. Hundreds of families had to be resettled.

The threat to the environment has grown to such dimensions in the USA that many Americans are giving serious thought to ways of saving it and to the future of nature and mankind. The American scientists I talked with emphasized the urgent need for emergency measures to save all the living things around us. Some of them, drawing their facts from the situation in the USA itself, argued that it is already too late to save nature (the water, soil, and air) from pollution, that all efforts to clean up the environment are doomed to failure, that the deterioration now underway is irreversible. It is terrible to hear such things in America, with its fabulously beautiful open spaces and endlessly varied nature. Efforts are being made to avert the imminent danger. Perhaps it is not yet too late.

Business, however, has no faith in the dream of saving the environment, and will not put up the money for it. The Warner & Swasey Company has announced this, quite categorically, in the pages of *U.S. News and World Report*. Which will prove stronger in the end, business or the voice of reason? For the time being the monopolies are keeping a tight hold on their purse-strings. Official recommendations and instructions are drowned in an ocean of sabotage and bureaucracy. In 1970 the federal government's regulations on environmental protection ran to twenty thousand pages; ten years later they filled over seventy-seven thousand pages. Through these thickets of red tape prowl the canny lawyers of the monopolies, who serve the interests of their masters to the detriment of all mankind. Nature, the environment we all live in, is after

all a single, indivisible whole. The damage it suffers in Detroit is felt in Kaluga too, and in Bombay.

There is no denying that the phenomenon commonly known as the American way of life is a complex and contradictory thing. I have talked about that way of life with many people in the USA — some who were satisfied with it and others who were not. Up to now the majority of Americans has continued to believe in the effectiveness of the free enterprise system, that is, in the capitalist road of development. And although that majority is now beginning to show signs of serious erosion the system continues to function, which means that it enjoys a certain degree of support. It is easy to understand why. In a span of time that seems insignificant when compared to the history of mankind, the United States has undergone intensive industrial development and emerged as the leader of the capitalist world. Even today Americans cannot help feeling impressed by this fact, which they regard as the most convincing proof of their system's worth.

Much has changed, of course, since the days when the rapidly ascendant free enterprise system came to dominate our planet, seemingly forever. Now even *Time* magazine betrays uncertainty. "Is capitalism working well enough?" it asks. "Can the system suffer and survive these problems? Can it be repaired or is it fatally flawed?"

Adam Smith, the ideologue of early capitalism, maintained that each individual, seeking his own profit, would promote society's good, as if guided by an "invisible hand." This is a philosophy of striking simplicity, easily comprehended, but one that has been — alas!— thoroughly refuted, and most of all by the example of the present-day United States. Earlier, in considering a wide variety of aspects of the American way of life, we considered many of the costs of this system, which continues to function but remains as unjust as ever. Now it finds itself in grave difficulties, and people are losing faith in it.

"The central economic fact of our day is the declining vitality and élan of capitalism and capitalists," says economist Robert Lecachman. "The joints of that once wonderfully flexible structure are becoming more and more calcified and rigid," mourns Tibor Scitovsky, another economist. Lee Lacocca, Chairman of the Chrysler Corporation, puts it more bluntly: "Free enterprise has gone to hell." John Fitzgerald Kennedy spoke of the decline of America's ideological vigor in these terms: "What we need now in this nation, more

than atomic power, or airpower, or financial, industrial, or even manpower, is brain power."

The note of nostalgia for strength of mind is no accident. Americans have always held strength, especially physical strength, in high regard. The great majority of the population are passionate sports fans. Competitive games are highly developed and popular in schools, institutions of higher learning, and the army. The accomplished athlete has nothing to fear from his shortcomings in academics or military service. Candidates for the presidency and other high offices always emphasize that they participated in sports in their younger days, and old photographs showing them in team colors are an obligatory part of campaign publicity. Records and other sporting highlights are counted among the most important landmarks of American history. Sports stars are idolized by the public and command salaries in the hundreds of thousands at the height of their careers. (The famed American boxer Muhammad Ali sometimes received several million dollars for a single fight).

The fans made a demigod out of hulky Joe Namath, one of the most celebrated figures in American football. This game is quite distinct from our European football, which the Americans call soccer. To understand America fully it is probably indispensable to know American football, which the experts call the "number one national sport." Frenzied fans by the hundreds of thousands fill the stadiums, and one hundred and fifty million (according to statistics) watch televised games at home. The sport has also been called "total war." In a single year professional and amateur players inflicted 1.3 million various injuries on one another, and forty-nine died on the playing fields — half of them under eighteen. (Boys begin learning the elements of the game at six or seven).

Of course these fierce battles do more than break bones and damage internal organs. They also produce a marked growth in musculature, and simultaneously a withering of the spirit and dimming of the intellect. Evidence of this are the spiritual poverty of the great majority of America's sports heroes and the morals of professional sport in the USA. Players are bought and sold like prize bulls. Their destinies are in the hands of men for whom sport is another form of business, another way to make a profit, and nothing more. There is nothing business will not do to make a profit. Professional sports are in bondage to the betting office. Millions of Americans wager money on sporting events, and the operators

of the betting business sometimes guarantee a maximum profit for themselves by fixing the outcome in advance. This turns competitions into a spectacle managed from backstage and athletes into obedient lackeys. It is no wonder at all that the American Mafia has long taken a special interest in professional sport. Many team owners have gangland connections, and some of the many millions betting offices take in find their way into the safes of underworld organizations. And so, in the crucible of the so-called American way of life, the enthusiasm of the fans and their worship of strength is transformed into dollars to line the pockets of legitimate and criminal business.

The glorification of strength is a tradition of long standing in the USA. America has turned out a whole series of films on one and the same subject — Superman, a human being possessed of truly fabulous, incredible strength. This modern Hercules came to the movies by way of comic strips, where heroes make up for what they lack in deftness and intelligence with a superabundance of crude physical strength. Whole generations of Americans have been brought up on his comic-book and cinematic adventures. A colossal business has sprung from Superman worship in the USA and been carried to such lengths that the enterprising businessmen who make their living from it invested sixty million dollars in the making of the film *Superman*, their latest effort. The sum was without precedent in the history of American cinema and of course it was expected to bring in mammoth returns. Before its release the film was heavily advertised in both the USA and other Western countries. Television and the press touted *Superman* ceaselessly, and the public was bombarded with images of its hero. This product of a poverty-stricken imagination has so penetrated America's day-to-day life and been so relentlessly promoted that it dictates not only fashions but conduct too, becoming a tool of American business and at the same time a means of propagandizing the American way of life. Superman teaches respect for strength and strength alone.

Strange to say, though, the popularity of sport, the universal enthusiasm for competition, and the exaltation of force go hand in hand with constant complaints about the poor physical condition of the younger generation. According to *U. S. News and World Report*, each year nearly nine percent of the 340,000 men and women enrolled in the American armed services are discharged immediately as physically unqualified, and far greater is the proportion of recruits who fail to survive

their first term of service for the same reason. *Time* cites Pentagon figures showing that over a two-year period eleven percent of the people who joined the Marines, the elite force of the American military, were discharged for reasons ranging from medical disabilities to drug abuse.

A direct consequence of the worship of naked physical strength in the USA is the cult of firearms. Americans have accumulated so many guns in their homes that there is no counting them any more. Some sources maintain that US citizens own a hundred million firearms; others put the figure at twice that. This is more than just a surprising phenomenon. It represents a way of life equipped with its own philosophy: "God created men, and Colonel Colt made them equal." The end result of this "equality" has come to 800,000 deaths by shooting in the USA since 1900. That is 250,000 deaths more than the toll of all the wars the United States has fought in during this century.

Senator Edward Kennedy, whose brothers John and Robert fell to the bullets of assassins, proposed a measure requiring permits for the exercise of the right to bear arms. The Senate voted it down, seventy-eight to eleven. The voice of reason was drowned out by the profit-hungry manufacturers of firearms. Incidentally, the speech President Kennedy was to make in Dallas, the city where he was assassinated, ended with these words: "The righteousness of our cause must always underlie our strength."

Strength without righteousness is one of the principal laws of America. Powerlessness before injustice is a consequence of that law. This symbiosis between strength and powerlessness is yet another of America's predictable paradoxes.

A public opinion poll conducted in Washington showed that one out of four Americans would be willing to commit murder if paid well enough and provided with assurances that no one would find out.

President Theodore Roosevelt said that America should speak softly and carry a big stick. It was he that declared that if the other countries of the Western Hemisphere showed "weakness" or "misbehaved" the USA would have to assume the role of an international police force. Here is where gun worship and the cult of force emerged into the international arena. What has it led to? Half a million American officers and men were sent to Vietnam along with untold amounts of up-to-date military hardware. America discharged more explosives in Indochina than in World War II and the Korean

War combined. The end result was panicked flight before the onslaught of the national liberation movement of the South-East Asian peoples.

Once again, however, the lesson failed to take. The United States continues to set store in strength and finds that even some of its allies are "misbehaving" these days, as Teddy Roosevelt would have said. Washington is particularly vexed that many in the West are not at all delighted with various foreign policy moves it has made — the abortive military putsch against Iran, for instance, or the so-called boycott of the Moscow Olympics, or the USA's attempts to arrange things in the Middle East to its own liking on the basis of Israel's deal with Egypt. The *Washington Post* complains that all over the world the USA's leadership, competence, and consistency are being called into question. Such doubts were palpable even at the Venice summit conference of the seven leading capitalist countries.

Meanwhile the USA continues to insist on its own high-handed (to put it mildly) foreign policy course and tries to compensate for a lack of credible arguments with a buildup of its military might. In 1980 yet another hue and cry was raised in the United States, this time over the poor combat and physical preparedness and inadequate numbers of armed services personnel. Thus the quest for arguments had become a question of "cannon fodder." The army's professional qualifications are the concern of the Pentagon, of course. As for physical preparedness, it leads us back again to the already familiar American paradox: professing the cult of strength, they beat their heads against the wall of their own helplessness.

It is reason, not strength, that ultimately prevails in this world. The international arena is not a field for playing American football. Other countries have shown scant interest in the game, and in just the same way they will not accept the policy of the big stick. It is time Washington understood this; time it stopped flexing its muscles, relaxed a bit, and thought things over. It has long been known that the sublime is but a single step from the ridiculous. Why paint yourself into a corner and then rage at your predicament?

Canned Laughter

It is traditional in American television for live studio audiences to be present at the taping of variety shows, talk shows,

game shows, and many other types of broadcasts. When you first watch such productions you cannot help being puzzled by the enthusiastic reactions of such audiences, and especially by the roars of laughter that almost every quip from the master of ceremonies evokes. Most amazing of all is that while the live audience — by the sound of things — is rolling the aisles an American sitting at home in front of his television screen will not so much as purse his lips in amusement.

I must confess that I was stumped by this riddle. Why should everything seem funnier in the studio than at home in front of the television set? Then I read in an American magazine that peals of live audience laughter are recorded in advance and added to the sound track as deemed appropriate. Canned laughter — as simple as that!

Much of American propaganda is founded on the same kind of cheap tricks, but strange to say it is not always possible to see through them right away. What is more, it is not enough simply to understand that canned laughter is intended to shore up official optimism or, to put things in broader terms, the American way of life. Let us return to our television viewer at home. He is not laughing. He is a spectator, not a participant. This, in my view, is the primary effect of the television propaganda machine. It is turning Americans into a nation of spectators.

The spiritual and intellectual vacuum that results is immediately refilled. With what? Why, with the products of television! Surveys of public opinion in the USA show that television exerts an enormous influence over the inner world of Americans. More than all the other mass media it is the three major commercial television networks — NBC, CBS, and ABC — that form the stereotypes of the "average American," his conceptions — oftentimes regrettably inaccurate — of his country, the world, and what is important in life.

Stereotypes — there is the heart of the matter! Leading American specialists in propaganda attribute great importance to such stereotypes, which are imprinted somewhat like a genetic code on the ordinary reader and viewer, that is on the masses of "similarly minded" people.

Probably the number one stereotype is that "Red means bad." It was canned long ago and is drummed into the heads of Americans with all the devices of bourgeois propaganda. In essence the main drive, directed against the Soviet Union, is pursued without letup; at times it becomes positively hysterical. This drive has a rich history and deep roots fed by class hatreds. Let us recall that between 1917 and 1919 the *New York Times*

made no less than ninety predictions of the "inevitable collapse" and "fast approaching downfall" of Soviet power. No sooner had Lenin's decree on peace resounded around the world than the *Washington Post* responded by calling for war against the first workers' and peasants' state. When efforts to stifle the newborn republic failed, its enemies fell back on lies, slander, misinformation, and suppression of the truth about the USSR. Decades of such tactics are bound to have their effects.

It has been nearly a quarter of a century since my first visit to the United States, and yet I continue to be amazed at how little Americans know about our country. There is simply no comparison between the meager and usually distorted information they have and what people in the Soviet Union know about the USA. The fact is so obvious, widely known, and indisputable that I cannot remember a single occasion when it has been denied or doubted. Several times in recent years, on the initiative of both the Soviet side and the American, citizens of each of the two countries have been surveyed to find out how much they know about the other. Some of the answers given by Americans are enough to make your hair stand on end. Politicians, bankers, people in the publishing business, and so on — not ordinary citizens, but members of what can only be called the elite — were asked to answer elementary questions like these: "How many Union republics are there in the USSR?" (the numbers given varied from nine to forty); "Name four Soviet writers" (no one in the large group surveyed could name more than one); "What Soviet films have you seen?" (only two people had seen any). Another example. American college students majoring in geography were tested on their knowledge of the Soviet Union. The questions were on the elementary-school level, but nonetheless many of the answers given were simply ludicrous.

This is not the fault of the American people but their misfortune. There can be no question about their intelligence or their curiosity. What I remember most about my meetings with Americans are the hundreds of questions they asked and their interest in all sides of life in our country. I spent several days at the Soviet exhibition held in Los Angeles to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of the October Revolution and saw how eager Americans are for reliable information about the USSR. I talked with people who had come to see the exhibition, pored over their many comments in the visitors' book, and attended question-and-answer sessions in the evenings. In all of this I saw proof of how great curiosity about our country is

among the American people. But there is no reason to rely on my personal impressions alone for evidence.

Not long ago a book was published in the USA about the Soviet Union. It was brought out at the suggestion of the well-known magazine *National Geographic*. Its editor, Gilbert Grosvenor, writes in the preface that he himself, after visiting the USSR, realized how little his fellow countrymen know about it, how little the American media tell them about the Soviet Union. And so two Americans, a writer on geography and a professional photographer, went to the USSR for several months and put together a book that examines all fifteen of the Union republics. They tried to be objective observers, hoping thereby to improve the two peoples' understanding of one another. The first printing of their book, half a million copies, was sold out entirely and still the demand of the reading public was not satisfied.

One of the reasons for the book's success, which in American publishing is considered sensational, is the dearth of solid information about the Soviet Union in the USA. The tried and tested propaganda trick of simply keeping silent about the facts is sometimes carried to absurd lengths. At the world famous Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago, for instance, there is a display purporting to show the most important events in world history. It supposedly serves an educational purpose. The list includes neither the October Revolution nor the battles on the Soviet-German front during World War II. So, it is hardly the fault of ordinary Americans that they know virtually nothing about the Soviet Union.

American propaganda, the entire thrust of which is directed against our country, is usually a crude affair. Nonetheless, it is lamentably effective. It achieves its ends mainly through repetition. Hundreds of newspapers and magazines, printed in millions of copies each day, purvey both canned laughter and the misinformation of bourgeois propaganda to the American public. An example is the *Reader's Digest*, which has a circulation of thirty million in the USA and abroad and is published in fifteen different languages. It prints excerpts from other magazines in a convenient, pocket-sized format. *Reader's Digest* takes complex ideas and opinions and condenses them, as it were, making them accessible to everybody. It contains large doses of canned laughter too, and what are called helpful hints — how to keep from getting old, how to be a better cook, how to achieve happiness in marriage, and the like. The calculatedly "homey" flavor of American propaganda will be taken

up later; in the *Reader's Digest* it is used to spice dishes such as "the new Soviet threat to NATO," "can we stop the Soviet military machine in Africa?" and "espionage: the dark side of detente."

As monopoly capital has grown in the USA, big business has bought up the so-called independent organs of the periodical press. The information media have thus come to be concentrated in the hands of their real, behind-the-scenes masters — the financial magnates. This brings us to one of the main subterfuges used by America's propaganda stuntmen: "freedom of the press." It really does exist for those who buy the mass media for their own use in perpetuity, not to be shared with anybody. As for those who hold different opinions, they are free to print their shoestring magazines and newspapers. But the people who own publications like *Time, Newsweek, McCalls,* the *Reader's Digest*, and the *Los Angeles Times* have an enormous advantage in the exercise of their "freedom."

The influence of television is even more pervasive than that of the press. In 1945 — not so long ago, it seems — the Gallup Institute was asking Americans: "Do you know what television is? Have you ever seen a working television?" A quarter of a century later the same institute asked the questions: "What is your main source of information (radio, newspapers, magazines, or television)? What source do you place the most trust in?" The answer of the majority was television to both. Another indication of the sway television holds: it has been calculated that the average American spends about four hours a day (twenty-six hours and eighteen minutes a week, to be exact) in front of his television set. Children and teenagers put in even longer hours. These figures come from the highly regarded A. C. Nielsen Company, which uses the latest technology in its studies of the American viewing audience.

Thus by age eighteen the average American has acquired eighteen thousand hours of television experience — or television education, as it might be called. Overseeing this education is American monopoly capital, of which television is one of the main branches. Television is under the obligation to make profits; it has no right to serve another master. The press, television, and radio all belong to big business and at the same time are closely tied to it by the money they receive for advertising. They cannot help becoming its mouthpiece.

At one time the American weeklies *Life* and *Look* were, in essence, the main advertising channels among all the USA's media. Then the ascendency of television began to draw adver-

tising money away from them. Both magazines languished and eventually ceased publication. The press depends on big business for its lifeblood, as do all the mass media in the USA.

Advertising now occupies twelve to fourteen minutes of every television broadcasting hour, constantly interrupting programs of all sorts. And the more popular the show the more business will pay for advertising on it. One minute of air time during a big football game, for example, can cost $ 300,000. So it comes as no surprise that the pharmaceuticals industry alone spends $ 100 million every year on television commercials.

The media are not only spokesmen but also sources of income for big business, since communications is a profitable industry in its own right (millions of copies of newspapers and magazines, tens of millions of televisions). The very fact that business derives income from the mass media inevitably affects the bias and quality of the information they produce. The system is as simple and sure as a steel trap.

The RAND Corporation, which specializes in strategic research, has published a monograph entitled *Television and Human Behavior*. The authors studied more than 2,500 books on the subject, consulted public opinion polls, and analyzed hundreds of television programs. Among their conclusions is that for children and teenagers television now constitutes a more powerful educational force than either parents or schools, and that for adults it has become the principal source of information determining social behavior. The RAND Corporation investigators do not stop there, either. They say that the outlook for "mass psychotherapy" through television is "promising."

Things have not gone as far as that yet, but efforts are plainly being made to realize this questionable dream. Upon close examination of the endless stream of television programs of all sorts, it becomes clear that certain general ideas are being inculcated by mass suggestion. For example, American television is very persistent in hammering away at the point that the USA's non-white citizens are inferior. This is being done with all deliberation. An analysis was made of 5,600 television characters representing the USA's national minorities — blacks, Puerto Ricans, and Chicanos. It turned out that the great majority of them were shown as cowardly, unsophisticated, and vicious. Opposing them, naturally, were noble and brave white Americans, mainly policemen and sheriffs — that is, members of the punitive bodies that stand guard over the interests of white America.

One of the devices propaganda resorts to most often is burying the essence of a problem in an avalanche of gossip and

personal trifles relating to the same topic, thereby hiding its social underpinnings and leaving the reader or viewer with superficial details. One shrewd television critic has noted that the American viewing public knows all about the family lives of Sadat and Begin, but would be unable to name even half of the newly independent countries of Africa or Asia.

The mention of Sadat and Begin is not coincidental. The pseudo-drama of what was portrayed as their remarkable personal rapport was used by television and the press as a smokescreen for the betrayal of the interests of the Palestinian people. Once again the social essence of the problem had been obscured by propagandists' claptrap.

Does all this have an influence on Americans? The sad truth is that it does. You see it when you travel around the United States, when you meet Americans and talk with them. They have little idea what our country is really like. Instead they are pumped full of misinformation hinging largely on the mythical Soviet threat, the bromide "Red means bad," and the like. The less an American knows about the Soviet Union, the firmer the grip such notions have on him. When confronted with the facts that have been hidden from him, he is simply at a loss. It is difficult for him to imagine that with the seemingly wide range of information at his disposal (television, the press, etc.) he should be utterly in the dark about certain things.

The TV serial about the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union (1941-1945) produced jointly by the USA and the USSR played in the United States as *The Unknown War*. The title (which of course was invented by the Americans, not us) is an indictment of bourgeois propaganda in the USA, which has kept tens of millions of intelligent adults in ignorance of the greatest war in history — and a war that had a direct bearing on the history of the USA, at that. It is plain that the heroic feats of our people have been ignored for a reason. After all, any right-thinking individual, upon hearing about the enormous losses suffered by the USSR, would immediately begin to feel doubts about the "Soviet threat" and the countless variations played on that theme.

Indeed the truth about the Soviet Union's stupendous war effort is a powerful weapon in the struggle against those who spread misinformation, as all of my conversations with Americans have shown me. People in the USA have heard and read all about the doings of the Americans and their Western Allies in World War II, but it seems the decisive force in the battle against Nazi Germany has somehow been overlooked.

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Hundreds —— no, thousands — of books, television shows, and films have told Americans about the war, but little can be learned from them about the battles on the Soviet-German front. A paradox? No, what we have here is a falsification of history. And as those fiery years recede into the past the efforts to distort and belie are pursued ever more actively and brazenly. It is no secret, for example, that American propaganda is making a considerable contribution to the drive to whitewash nazism, to conceal the dirt and blood in which it covered itself. The average American knows much more about Hitler and his entourage than about the Soviet Union's war against the Nazis, and what he does know comes from those who twist the truth to suit their purposes.

The American publicist Sidney Lens notes that those who are getting rich on the arms race spend millions upon millions each year to justify it. Their money goes to create an atmosphere in which it is difficult to break out of the old habits of thought, difficult to overcome the fears of communism that have been kept up for six decades, difficult to set aside stultifying cliches like "Better dead than Red." There is no doubt that this cliche makes people stupid, unable to think for themselves, and this is one of the most tragic consequences of bourgeois propaganda. Misinformation can so distort a person's understanding of the world that he loses all sense of reality.

Another American journalist, William Young, maintains that misleading television programs have destroyed the idea of truth in many viewers and changed the way both adults and children look at the world. Professor Paul Kurtz says Americans are so confused and intellectually incapacitated by the electronic mass media that it is becoming harder and harder for them to tell fiction from fact. As for the press, Kurtz says it apes television in everything.

Not long ago yet another of America's propaganda soap bubbles burst: the image of the Shah of Iran as a humane and enlightened monarch, the "father of his country," which the bourgeois news media of the USA had worked long years to create. The revolution in Iran revealed all the crimes committed by this butcher against his own people. Before his fall, though, the noted *Washington Post* columnist Joseph Kraft called him one of the most intelligent and experienced rulers in the world. Another writer for the same paper described a visit he made to one of SAWAK's detention centers in terms that made the Shah's blood-stained prison look almost like a health resort. The revolution in Iran showed what was really behind all

these puffs by bourgeois propagandists. It seems they were quite simply and systematically bribed by the Iranian ambassador to the United States with cash, fine wines, and caviar (a very costly delicacy in the United States). Among those receiving such payments were many of the country's leading journalists. It may be noted in passing that in this case they were serving not only the Shah, for his money and his caviar, but also the military-industrial complex, which wanted to see the Shah portrayed as a noble ruler, not a bloody tyrant sunk in corruption. After all, the Shah was one of the biggest buyers of American weaponry. From 1950 to 1971, Iran's military purchases from the USA did not exceed one billion dollars a year; between 1971 and 1978 they rose as high as nineteen billion a year. It might be said that big business and the Pentagon had opened a new branch in Iran, had secured a new source of profit. A swarm of money-hungry politicians and entrepreneurs gathered round immediately, and as we have seen they could not dispense with the services of traders in misinformation.

One of the chief characteristics of the American news media is their sensational, scandal-mongering approach. This is both a style and a method. It simultaneously achieves two ends: it degrades the taste of the mass reader, viewer, and listener, and it dulls his mental faculties. The media fill his head with useless and often pernicious nonsense while passing over important social problems in silence. Society gossip and police-blotter journalism are enthroned as leading genres, and the man in the street has long been trained to regard them as essential to his everyday functioning. And it is this sort of reporting, aimed at the lowest tastes and the broadest audience, that brings the biggest profits to those who own the airwaves and the columns of newsprint. Every broadcasting day on American television and radio stations, every issue of any bourgeois newspaper or magazine, furnishes convincing proof that an intentional effort is being made to pervert society and lower moral standards. This side of bourgeois propaganda is no secret from anybody. It cannot be hidden. It announces itself blatantly in foot-high headlines and the endless palaverings of radio and television. This is not the place for a detailed analysis, but a single example will show how a vulgar sensation is blown up to national, or even international, proportions.

A series of crimes against young women was committed in New York City. Six were killed, and seven wounded. It was clear that all the attacks were the work of a single criminal.

Television, radio, and the press had a field day. During the long period in which the killer was at large, the news media, which were making huge profits from the sensation, virtually acted as his accomplices, glorifying and encouraging him. Sales of newspapers and magazines shot up, and of course radio and television did not lag behind. The press even predicted that the maniac would strike again on the anniversary of his first assault. It is quite possible this provoked the killing committed two days after the anniversary. When the murderer was finally arrested a hoard of newspaper and magazine clippings about his crimes was found in his room.

The murderer was one David Berkowitz, who called himself the Son of Sam. He had done military service in South Korea, where he began to use drugs, and after his discharge worked as a postal clerk. Drugs, the cult of violence prevailing in the USA, and loneliness brought him to a mental breakdown. Such cases are not uncommon in America.

While the hunt for the killer was still on, publishing houses and television and film studios had made deals on books and screenplays about his life, his crimes, and his victims. After Berkowitz was arrested he too took up the pen and promptly acquired a literary agent, as is the practice in the USA. Berkowitz's lawyer took bids for tapes of his client's story. The killer's neighbor charged a fee of fifteen thousand dollars per interview. His former girlfriend sold his letters for several hundred dollars each, and the parents of his victims somehow counted up the loss they had suffered, translated it into dollars, and brought suit for several million. In a word, a brutal madman had become the center of a multimillion dollar industry. *Newsweek* quite rightly called the whole affair repellent, but nonetheless devoted a feature article to Berkowitz and put his portrait on the cover. Anything for a profit.

The essence and style of bourgeois propaganda can be seen no less plainly from the way the execution of an unremarkable killer was turned into a national spectacle. Back in 1849, Charles Dickens wrote: "I believe that a sight so inconceivably awful as the wickedness and levity of the immense crowd collected at ... execution ... could be imagined by no man.... I am solemnly convinced that nothing... could work such ruin as one public execution." In Dickens's day a crowd of onlookers might gather to take in such a "show." In the United States today the television audience was numbered in the millions.

Lawrence Schiller, a film producer and photographer, outsmarted and outmaneuvered all his competitors. He not only witnessed in person the execution by shooting of the convicted murderer, Gary Gilmore, but also obtained exclusive rights to the publication of related materials. The enterprising Schiller put Gilmore and the members of his family under contract; newspapers, magazines, radio, and television were all forced to deal with him. He paid tens of thousands of dollars to Gilmore, his parents, his girlfriend and her mother, and the families of his two victims, and later received hundreds of thousands from the various news media in return. He drove hard bargains for sixteen hours of taped conversations between himself and Gilmore and for photographs of the condemned man. After selling the whole story to *Playboy* magazine, Schiller made a contract with the condemned man and his family for a television film.

And so millions of Americans watched a real-life execution. The prison authorities issued hourly bulletins (also, perhaps, at Schiller's expense?) about the preparations underway and about the execution itself. When the head of the prison announced that the sentence would be carried out at dawn, a television producer indignantly demanded a more exact time. Live television requires precision!

Putting it all in perspective, the *International Herald Tribune* noted that gladiator fights are regarded as a symptom of Rome's decadence, and asked what could be said of a modern society in which retribution for a crime is turned into a circus and broadcast into every home.

Big business and politics are not the only driving forces in the American propaganda machine. The government public information apparatus is important too. It employs some five thousand specialists and has an annual budget of approximately one billion dollars. The government spends something like two hundred million dollars a year on public relations for itself.

It is perhaps not universally known that the Pentagon has a vast propaganda machine of its own. It publishes more than a thousand newspapers and magazines, which are circulated all over the world, and has 350 broadcasting facilities (including a hundred television stations) in thirty different countries. The Pentagon's very considerable efforts in the USA and abroad are directed to implanting the idea that détente is harmful and dangerous to America. The enormous influence the Pentagon exerts on news media and television, publishers and film studios, must not be overlooked either. Americans

are subjected to a barrage of books, television programs, and films glorifying the force of arms, militarism, and an aggressive foreign policy. Similarly ubiquitous are the Pentagon's recruiting advertisements.

During prime evening viewing time, when a minute of air time is most costly, an attractive stewardess appears on the screen and invites a group of young fellows aboard. She lures them with tales of the things there are to see and do in faraway countries, of the adventures and pleasures that await them. All they have to do is exchange their drab civilian clothes for a handsome military uniform.

This one must provoke guffaws in the barracks. But unemployment hits hardest among the young, and the cost of higher education is steep. Even advertisements like this one can make an impression, especially on someone who is just eighteen.

America's secret police, the FBI, goes in for the same sort of propaganda. A television series on the FBI ran for several decades. Its hero was personally selected by bureau chief J. Edgar Hoover, who also vetted each episode before it was aired. It goes without saying that Hoover's television protégé mouthed dire warnings about America's enemies without and within and glorified the FBI as the savior of the nation.

The CIA is no less zealous in making use of American propaganda. It was revealed not long ago that hundreds of American journalists, both in the USA and abroad, are agents of the CIA. A Congressional investigating committee found that at least twenty-nine percent of the CIA's clandestine operations have been conducted through the mass media and propaganda.

This brings us to the propaganda the USA directs at other countries. The government devotes considerable attention to such campaigns. It is worthy of note that the volume of information going from the USA and the other developed capitalist countries to the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America is at present a hundred times greater than the volume of information moving in the opposite direction. This says something about the scope of the efforts being made by the Western propaganda and information services, among which those of the USA are first and foremost. But evidently the USA felt that its expenditures were not producing what they should, and so it was decided that foreign policy propaganda agencies should be reorganized. A new body, the International Communication Agency (ICA), was created on the foundations of the United States Information Agency (USIA) and the

State Department Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The USIA, formerly the main instrument of the foreign policy propaganda effort, had politically bankrupted itself, so to speak. Established during the cold war, it was hopelessly infected with the virus of those years. In a span of only fifteen months there were sixty-seven mass demonstrations in various countries against the activities of the USIA. The old shingle had to be taken down, and there was an administrative reshuffling, but at bottom, alas, the new organization was no different than the old, except for its even wider range of action. The International Communication Agency had more than two hundred foreign branches, employing more than five thousand people in all. The new agency was charged with overseeing the Voice of America, which has more than a thousand transmitter stations, broadcasting in thirty-seven languages, and also the CIA's subversive stations, Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe, which use government funds to fill the airwaves with hatred and slander. Senator Fulbright once called these stations part of a system of lies and deceit, a chain of conspiracies aimed at fooling not only the American people but anyone who would listen. But despite all Washington's frantic efforts to increase the flow of misinformation to other countries it is clear that things are not going well. The Reagan administration ordered yet another housecleaning, and the USIA was resurrected.

The champions of the American way of life do not like to admit that the government runs a gigantic propaganda machine. In fact they often have the effrontery to maintain that no such machine exists, that everything in the USA is based on an "independent" press and "freedom of speech." As the examples cited convincingly prove, Americans are bombarded with information carefully chosen, in its force and direction, by the powers that be in the USA. Through it, they manipulate the consciousness of the public to their own ends. And even the most elaborate contortions of bourgeois propaganda cannot overturn this fact.

The Dream and Horror Factory

Films and television are the USA's most important media of information and entertainment, so it is worth taking a closer look at what stands behind them. Hollywood, blessed by nature and carefully tended by man, seems at first to be

a corner of paradise — *sumptuous homes with striking* architecture, lush California greenery, the *gentle, temperate* climate. Quiet seems to pervade everything. There is no bustle on the neatly groomed streets, which are uncrowded and antiseptically clean. It is hard to believe this is the center of the film industry that plays such an important part in America's life. As much seems to be said and written about films in the USA as about politics. The Oscar awards ceremonies draw an audience of seventy-five million in America alone; the proceedings are also shown on television in forty-four countries around the world, where they are seen by 250 million people.

The Oscars are given away in public view, but the business that stands behind them is securely hidden behind the high walls of the film studios, whose inaccessibility to outsiders — their secretiveness, to put it plainly — is remarkable. This is more than a matter of competition between studios. The real secret is that film studios are industrial enterprises dedicated to making a profit, and to nothing more. By and large the concept of quality is replaced by that of quantity, expressed in dollars. The bigger the profit, the better the film. And in the USA the biggest profits can be made by keeping things under wraps. But this is not a fact the studios like to publicize. Hence the forbidding, impenetrable walls.

The leading film factories are the so-called Big Seven: XX Century Fox, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Warner Brothers, Columbia Pictures, Paramount, Universal, and United Artists. Each year one hundred million Americans, and many millions more in other countries, go to see their productions.

It took a number of years for big business to squeeze out the professional cinematographers and assume control of the Holywood studios. In the USA a single businessman or corporation often engages simultaneously in a variety of million or billion dollar operations: making pet food, manufacturing toys, and producing films, for example. Such diversification is one of the main characteristics of modern business. The Hollywood studios are run by large industrial concerns acting through agents. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, for instance, is controlled by Kirk Kerkorian, who made billions in the hotel business. By the way, the studio now makes more on Nevada gambling operations than on its films. United Artists — once among the most interesting film studios — has undergone an evolution that is most instructive. It was founded back in the twenties by Charlie Chaplin, Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks

and other actors who were trying to keep American ... from falling into the hands of the monopolies. In the end, though, the offensive of capital proved inexorable; in 1952 the studio, exhausted from its unequal battle, was taken over by two prosperous New York lawyers. Today United Artists belongs to a giant conglomerate, the Transamerica Corporation. Columbia Pictures is part of a conglomerate commanded by Wall Street magnate Charles Allen. Warner Brothers belongs to a New York conglomerate under the direction of billionaire Steven Ross. And so on.

These corporations serve the film studios mainly as bankers. Business invests money in films hoping to reap a profit. The ideal, the dream of every investor, is to put in a few million and get back tens of millions. Sometimes it happens: The lure draws businessmen from all fields who have no knowledge of the art of cinema. This affects not only the quality of Hollywood's production but also the relations between financiers and the professionals they employ. Thus even in this highly distinctive branch of production we see the conflicts between labor and capital that are unavoidable in a society where the dollar is king. Sixty-seven thousand Hollywood actors went on strike in 1980, and stayed away from their jobs for several months. The reason for their discontent can be seen from these figures: two percent of the members of the profession make over $ 50,000 a year, while another fifty-nine percent make less than $ 1,000. Most actors spend more time looking for work than on the lot. The scale of the strike, and also of American film production, can be seen from the fact that at the time of the walkout one hundred and thirty television and screen features were in the making.

Film production is so costly that only well-funded businesses can undertake it. In just one summer the Big Seven spent some one hundred and fifty million on their creations. Here are some examples. *New York, New York* cost nine million dollars; *A Bridge Too Far*, twenty-four million; *MacArthur*, nine million; and *The Deep*, ten million. If the film becomes a hit the profits can recoup such expenses several times over. *Rocky* cost United Artists only one million and returned a profit of some fifty million.

The one who puts up the money, of course, is the one who gets the profits. The one who pays the piper is the one who calls the tune. The trouble with this is that production decisions are made by people who have a flair for money, for the take, but are lacking, as a rule, in creativity.

Let us take for example *Jaws*, one of the biggest box-office hits, which brought its makers a profit of two hundred million dollars. The story line is simple, and no doubt familiar to many readers already, but I will summarize it nonetheless. A gigantic man-eating shark begins to haunt the waters off a fashionable resort. All efforts to destroy it fail, and finally a specialist is called in — an experienced and fearless man — but also in vain. He wants to do away with the shark personally. Once he has the creature almost trapped, but is too arrogant to radio for assistance and so it escapes once again. His maniacal pursuit occupies a good half of the film. In the end the adventurer's overbearing pride and vanity are punished — he is eaten by the shark just before it is finally destroyed. A secondary line just manages to hint that the local authorities, who would face a loss of income if the presence of the shark became widely known, are trying to stifle reports of attacks.

I cannot agree with the critics who call *Jaws* a typical horror movie. It is true that extraordinary cunning was lavished on the mechanical shark, which looks just like the real thing, but the only really gory scene comes at the end, when the hunted devours the hunter. This is nothing compared to the carnage of most American horror films. From the artistic point of view *Jaws* is indifferent, neither too good nor too bad.

Why its great commercial success, then? In other words, why did so many people pay to see it?

I would attribute the film's popularity first of all to advertising. *Jaws* was promoted on a scale unprecedented even for the USA; the campaign was truly worldwide. It could also be said that the makers of the film simply got lucky. Bringing out these undistinguished films is rather like playing roulette. Sometimes your number comes up. Not very often, but sometimes. This is what happened with *Jaws*. I am convinced that it is chance, coincidence, that usually decides the commercial success of a film. Old hands in the trade develop a feeling for potential hits, but unfortunately this feeling has nothing to do with an appreciation of artistic values.

Two more examples to illustrate these thoughts.

In recent years the Hollywood dream factory has been partly retooled into a horror factory. Perhaps the American viewer has tired of rose-colored reveries having little in common with the restless spirit of the times. They have given way to a rash of horror movies, which reached its peak with *The Exorcist*. The film was a huge success at the box-office, and was promptly followed by a continuation, *The Heretic* — which was a failure. The reason remains elusive. Horror films are still in vogue. The lack of originality in the subject cannot be blamed either. *The Godfather* — which is not a horror movie in any sense — achieved a well-deserved success, and its sequel was also well received, although it followed close on the heels of the first film and contained nothing new.

Now let us return to horror movies, which can tell us a good deal about how things stand in American films today. It is plain to see that there is an audience for such productions in the USA. I myself find them sickening. I could not watch *The Exorcist* without revulsion. I had decided that I must see it, and sit through it to the end, because it was being hailed as an "epoch-making event in cinematography." But it was simply unbearable to watch the torments suffered by the film's heroine, a little girl supposedly possessed by the Devil, and to hear the most unthinkable, monstrous obscenities spewing from the mouth of a child. *The Exorcist* is a truly frightening film. It is not the events on screen that provoke fear, however, but concern for mankind. Where is it headed — or rather where are the people who make such films trying to take it? It should be added that the film depicts modern medicine as helpless; it is two priests who finally drive out the Devil.

The new wave of horror movies, sad as it may be for real art, has proved a boon to Hollywood, which had fallen on hard times. Of course there were numerous, and thoroughly ghastly, horror movies in the USA before, but current productions are distinguished by their greater professionalism and technical virtuosity. In my opinion their value as works of art is nil. They are characterized, in the first place, by their degradation of the people who work on them and the people who see them, and in the second by the cynicism of their makers. It would be simpler if a lack of talent could be blamed for everything. To be precise, however, it is the films themselves that are devoid of any glimmer of talent. No doubt many of the film makers do have a certain natural gift, but they have been forced to put it up for sale, which of course makes it lose its magical power. A third characteristic of these films is that they are aimed at the mass viewer, as the manufacturers of cinematic horror see him — or rather, as they are making him. The ultimate target here is the box-office, money.

Many critics who have understood this simple recipe for the debasement of art think that film makers, or more accurately the businessmen who underwrite them, are intentionally trying

to pervert and stultify the viewing public. I would say this might even be taken as a sort of compliment to the businessmen who invest in films, most of whom lack the intellectual organization necessary for such cunning. Their overriding purpose is to make a profit; the corruption of society is a mere byproduct of their pursuit of the dollar. This explanation touches on the basis, the mainspring, of a society dominated by free enterprise, where ideology is a mere corollary of the supreme principle: If you are making money, you must be doing something right.

To analyze horror films and the motives of their makers seems to me a simpler matter than to say why they are so popular. Here the critic must yield to the sociologist, who can deploy all the latest scientific techniques, including computerized studies of public opinion. Nonetheless it is clear that the interest viewers take in such films is also rooted deep in the nature of a society where turning money into more money becomes a goal in its own right, subordinating to itself everything that is alive and blighting everything genuine it touches, including art.

There are some who group gangster films among horror movies, but I regard that as a mistake. To be sure, gangster films have scenes of appalling violence (the disease is endemic in American cinematography), but these scenes are not ends in themselves: they brutally, but truthfully, reflect the way life really is. Violence is indispensable in gangster films, because violence is the very heart of the American phenomenon known as organized crime, a ferocious predatory struggle for survival. In the world of legal business, competitors are done in financially; in the underworld the job is accomplished with a burst of submachine-gun fire. The history of organized crime in the USA is written in the blood shed in gangland feuds.

The prime specimen of the American gangster film is *The Godfather*, which for several years has enjoyed great popularity both in the USA and elsewhere. The soundtrack has also been a great hit. A Sicilian boy leaves home and goes to America, where he finds the living difficult. Several years of honest hard work fail to bring him happiness. He turns to crime and in the end becomes the boss of an underworld "family," within which he is known as Don Corleone. The part is played by Marlon Brando, which does a good deal to explain the film's success. We see the patriarchal workings of the Corleone family, the huge scope of its criminal activities, and the frightful carnage of gangland wars. *The Godfather* paints an explicit picture of the

huge influence gangsters have on American life and of their almost unlimited power.

Many of the latest American films are based on recent events. They are works of fiction, but with a documentary base. This trend found its way into films from literature. The characters in *The Godfather* allow us an occasional glimpse of their prototypes, but they are not really drawn from life; each of them contains a sizeable component of invention. By way of contrast, *Crazy Joe* is occupied from start to finish with relating contemporary occurrences in the criminal underworld. Crazy Joe is Joe Gallo, one of the leaders of the Cosa Nostra, and the other characters are close likenesses of equally notorious gangsters. The story line recounts an actual episode in a bloody struggle between competing gangs.

These films present the facts correctly and without distortion, but the point of view they adopt, the artistic treatment they give to the almost documentary material, cannot be called entirely correct. It might seem at first that films like *The Godfather* and *Crazy Joe* are exposés of the American way of life, but this is not really so. Intentionally or not, such films surround the criminal world with an aura of romance. Their directors take an admiring view of the strong and supposedly original personalities portrayed. There is constant emphasis on the gangsters' patriarchal way of life, their faithfulness to the traditions of their native Sicilian villages, their respect for the old, the virtue and piety of their women, the strict upbringing they give their children, and so on. Mario Puzo, who wrote *The Godfather* and also adapted it for the screen, admits that he had romanticized the Cosa Nostra.

It is interesting to note that the Cosa Nostra placed numerous difficulties in the way of work on *The Godfather* during its initial stages. Finally Albert Ruddy, the film's producer, invited gangland boss Joseph Colombo to breakfast. Colombo read the script and made several suggestions, which were accepted by the makers of the film. After that things went very nicely. The gracious Colombo even supplied the film crew with consultants, who furnished much useful information about fine points of the gangsters' trade. No wonder everything in the film looks so realistic!

Another trait shared by all gangster films is the sense of inevitability they create. Everyone sees that given the conditions existing in the USA there is no way to combat the evil; the gangs are outside the reach of the law and always will be. So in one way every motion picture of this kind is an advertisement

for the Cosa Nostra. This is why Joseph Colombo was so indulgent towards the makers of *The Godfather*. This is why tradition of glorifying crime in such films has become so firmly entrenched. It has been more than twenty years since I saw a film called *High School — Confidential* on one of my visits to the USA, but I found it so frightening that I still remember every detail. The film shows how gangsters make contact with high-school students and urge them to try drugs, hoping to trap new customers. And although a young police detective foils the criminals in the end, the viewer is left with the feeling that there is no way to stop the terrible spread of drug addiction in the USA. The detective's victory over the gangsters seems hollow. What is more, he struggles against them singlehanded, at his own peril. Once again the question arises: Does this film expose evil or advertise it? Of course it would be terrible to imagine that all the makers of such films are intentionally propagandizing crime. But the way they depict American reality on screen makes the criminal world seem admirable, rather than despicable. In the end the viewer is not indignant, but frightened.

One of the most notable films based on actual occurrences that has been made in recent years is *All The President's Men*. This title echoes that of the widely acclaimed American novel *All the King's Men*, which has been translated into Russian. The book is about political corruption in a state capital; the film, about corruption in the White House. *All the President's Men* is based on the Watergate affair, a scandal that shocked the whole world.

The material seemed to beg for interpretation in print and on the screen, and it found its chroniclers in Robert Woodward and Carl Bernstein of the *Washington Post*. They had covered the Watergate affair from its very beginnings. Later they brought out a book about it, which in turn became the basis for the film. Woodward and Bernstein dedicated their book to "the President's other men and women — in the White House and elsewhere — who took risks to provide us with confidential information. Without them there would have been no Watergate story told by the *Washington Post*."

Note the mention of "risks." The whole affair was indeed ticklish. Scandals involving political corruption are nothing new in the USA, but there had been none of such dimensions before in the country's entire two-hundred-year history. And although *All the President's Men* is based on detailed factual material, it does not probe the social wellsprings of the scandal. Just as in the film *High School — Confidential* the essence of

the problem is overshadowed by the heroic exploits of the detective, in *All the President's Men* the Watergate affair becomes a background for the daring deeds of investigative journalists. Be that as it may, the film was awarded four Oscars, giving further encouragement to the trend of basing feature films on documentary material.

Another trend observable in American films is the replacement of ordinary Westerns with space Westerns. *Star Wars* — with its battles in space, laser-beam duels, robots, improbable monsters, and horror on a truly cosmic scale — is a typical example. By the way, *Star Wars* broke all box-office records. Closely akin in genre is another blockbuster, *Superman*, whose hero conceals extraordinary strength and powers under an ordinary appearance. The film's director, Richard Donner, says it gives viewers what they want today, and its producer, who sank thirty-three million dollars into the project, adds that what the film has going for it is fantasy, escape from real-life problems.

One of the most memorable American films of recent years, in my opinion, is *Julia*, a rare and significant achievement in the history of motion pictures. *Julia* is based on an autobiographical novel by Lillian Hellman. It was directed by Fred Zinnemann, and the central role was played by Jane Fonda, an actress of great talent and unusual appeal. She is known in the Soviet Union as the heroine of *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* and also as a courageous champion of peace and progress. She was active in opposing the dirty war in Vietnam, even at the peril of her acting career.

At first Jane Fonda was no different from any "starlet" to be found in Hollywood's film studios and gossip columns. After she starred in *Barbarella*, the most talked-about hit of its season, people began to call her the American Brigitte Bardot. Fame, fortune, a luxurious home, a secure future — she had everything an actress dreams of in America. She came from a prosperous show-business family and had never taken any interest in politics. The path she traveled to political activism is one that a considerable part of the American intelligentsia has followed.

Jane Fonda proved to be something more than a pretty, or even a talented doll — a human being. She was able to see through the meretricious glamor of Hollywood to the reality of American life. She took her stand with those opposed to the war in Vietnam and to racism and social injustice in the USA. Barbarella (as many Americans knew her) was the special favorite

of America's men in uniform, and it was to them that she went first, to the centers where they spend the leaves granted them for rest and recreation, where the Pentagon offers them whiskey and strip-tease. But it was not as a Hollywood queen that Jane Fonda went to them. She went to arouse their consciences, to call on them to join the struggle against the USA's disgraceful aggression.

Official America looked around for ways to take vengeance on its former idol. Just at the time when Ms. Fonda made her first appeals to fighting men, decisions were being reached on the Oscars, the annual awards of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Everyone was sure Jane Fonda would get an Oscar this time. While making up her mind to speak out at military bases, Ms. Fonda knew that the award hung in the balance. She made her appeal. The Oscar was given to somebody else.

Jane Fonda went on to become one of the heroines of the anti-war movement in the USA. For this the former darling of Hollywood was arrested and thrown into a station-house jail on trumped-up charges. Little by little she came to realize that her talent could be used as a weapon in the just struggle. She gathered together a troupe, including many prominent actors, composers, musicians, and poets, to put on anti-war shows. They appeared with great success before servicemen both in the USA and in other countries. The deep purpose of the Fonda troupe was to provide an alternative to the shows presented by Bob Hope, a famous American comedian who has made a fortune as the Pentagon's official court jester. Together with his traveling show, he made regular appearances before American troops; his program had the Pentagon's approval.

In 1972, when Vietnam became an issue in the election campaign, the forces of reaction decided to change their attitude towards Jane Fonda. At last she received the Oscar she had long deserved. But she refused to be bought off. In the summer of 1972 she visited North Vietnam, where she witnessed the barbarities being wrought by the American war machine, saw with her own eyes the terrible results of the bombings, and met captured American pilots. Then she told the world about her experiences.

The militarists were outraged. They accused Ms. Fonda of everything short of high treason and demanded she be brought to trial. Undaunted, she went on with the fight.

But let us return to the film *Julia*. As the American press noted, Jane Fonda's role was not only a personal accomplishment for her but also a milestone in the evolution of American cinema. Over the past several years film actresses had receded into the background, become mere supports for the male leads. For one reason or another the female stars who had traditionally reigned on the screen had abruptly been eclipsed. Jane Fonda restored the tradition. She said of the part that it was her first chance to play a thinking woman, whose actions, at least during one important period in her life, were shaped by ideas.

The film tells the story of two childhood friends. Lillian, played by Jane Fonda, has grown up to be a writer, wholly devoted to her vocation. Julia enters into the struggle against fascism, which has begun to rear its head. (The film is set in the 30s.) When Julia finds herself in danger, her apolitical friend Lillian, ignoring all dangers, rushes to her side. She not only proves the power of true friendship through her deeds but also begins to take an interest in politics herself, to think about what is going on around her. The two friends are caught in an outbreak of fascist violence, and Julia perishes in the fires of the terror. Lillian, unable to believe what has happened, tries to trace her. But in vain.

Julia did not bring in the super-profits — sometimes tens of millions of dollars — that films occassionally make in the USA. The reasons for this are that real art is accorded little honor on the American market, that the film advances a progressive point of view, and that Jane Fonda is out of favor with the powers that be in the USA, who are in fact engaged in harassing and slandering her. Shortly after *Julia* was released, Ms. Fonda addressed a student audience at the University of Michigan. As usual she spoke not only about films but also about the agonizing issues of the day. She attacked the USA's big monopolies, which she said were controlling the lives of Americans. The Dow Chemical Company, one of the giants of the industry, came in for special censure. An old enmity exists between Fonda and Dow Chemical, which made the napalm dropped on Vietnam.

The president of Dow Chemical promptly responded with a letter to the president of the university, announcing that his company would no longer lend financial support to an institution that allowed Jane Fonda to speak against free enterprise to its students. Immediately thereafter several newspapers, as if on command, printed an article that lashed out against the actress both for her remarks in Michigan and for the film *Julia*, which told the story of the writer Lillian Hellman. The same article roundly applauded the action Dow Chemical had taken against Fonda and the University of Michigan, and called for

a tight financial rein to be kept on academic minds. Jane Fonda had every reason to denounce the tyranny of monopolies like Dow Chemical.

As we see, life in the USA is not easy for talented artists with progressive views. Similarly, films presenting such views have a hard time winning wide attention and popularity.

Now let us return to the starting point of this discussion of American films—to Hollywood, or rather to its moral climate, which is determined by its being a money factory. Big profits inspire the movie moguls with still greater greed. Some of them are not above common thievery and swindling. David Begelman, whose salary as president of Columbia Pictures was something over four hundred thousand dollars a year, contrived at the same time to embezzle tens of thousands from the company. When he was caught no one in Hollywood was overly shocked. For all its peculiarities, the world of movies is a microcosm of bourgeois society and shares the same morals. Corruption is the most widespread disease in American business and politics; there is no reason to expect that Hollywood should be immune.

The press helps promote the motion picture business by pandering to the cheap taste for rumors about the stars. These stories, while sometimes exaggerated, faithfully mirror the depressingly low and narrow interests of those whose lives they chronicle. They deal with personal earnings, scandals of every description, sexual irregularities, drunken sprees, fights, drug abuse, extravagant houses, clothing, and jewelry, etc. All this is retailed by publications with a daily circulation of millions. Among the scandals of recent years: Roman Polanski, known chiefly as a creator of horror movies, fled the USA after being charged with seducing minors. Linda Blair, the teenaged girl who played the lead in *The Exorcist,* was convicted of trafficking in drugs. Another Hollywood star, Farah Fawcett-Majors, has already been charged three times with shoplifting in women's clothing stores. Eighteen-year-old MacKenzie Phillips drinks herself into insensibility. And so on and so forth.

In conclusion, it may be noted that this greedy and wanton miniature world is not without its political side. The tone here is set by the rabid reactionaries of the motion picture business. Jane Fonda has not been the only one to suffer their persecution for advancing progressive views. Other victims include American actress Shirley MacLaine, who was active in the anti-war movement and advocated normalizing relations with Cuba, and the famed British actress Vanessa Redgrave, who shortly after coming to Hollywood was reviled and even threatened with physical violence because she called for a just settlement in the Middle East.

In a speech made at the Academy Awards ceremony, Vanessa Redgrave referred to the little band of Zionist scum whose behavior is an insult to Jews all over the world. Instantly, almost the entire glittering assembly was upon her. Men in evening dress and starched white shirts shook their fists at her and bellowed with rage. Women in ball gowns were no less vehement in expressing their fury. Hollywood had dropped its mask, revealing its political face in all its unsightliness.

Inside the Magic Box

The television broadcasting day in America is more than twenty hours long. Programming begins at six in the morning, and the last film winds up at about four AM. Different offerings are broadcast on each of several channels at once. It would probably be impossible to fill all this time with worthwhile programs, and in fact it appears no attempt is made to do so. Some of the reasons for this will be discussed later. First, a few facts about how American television works.

The country as a whole is served by three companies: the American Broadcasting Company (ABC), the National Broadcasting Company (NBC), and the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS). These three giants dominate the industry; the efforts of others in the field are of practically no account. The three are fierce competitors. Surveys are conducted constantly to determine which is attracting the most viewers, but the ultimate yardstick, and the end product of the networks' operations, is the dollar. The market is quick to react to the audience ratings. The stock of one company rises in price; that of another falls. The businessmen who buy advertising time are every bit as fickle. They rush to the company that is ahead, that is drawing the biggest audience at the moment. The leader among the three networks immediately raises its prices, charging advertisers more than the other two can get.

At the beginning of the 80s, ABC had a firm hold on first place in the American television market. NBC lagged far behind, with CBS right at its heels. The drama of this situation came from the underdog, CBS, having been the leader for twenty years. Many experts believe that ABC, having forged ahead, would retain its advantage for a long time — ten years at least.

The infighting among the three never ceases for a moment. Heads roll, just like in a real battle. The owners of CBS ordered a shake-up in the network's management, and NBC fired some four hundred employees.

This rivalry is focused on profits, and nothing but profits. It does nothing to improve the quality of programming. The reverse would be closer to the truth: programs aimed at the widest possible audience, the "mass" viewer, are not likely to excel artistically. *U. S. News and World Report* has offered some interesting reflections on this theme in an article with the eloquent title "TV's Drivel — and Worse." It pointed out that "shake-ups at the top in CBS and NBC, brought about because those two networks were running behind ABC in the fight for viewers, demonstrate once again the cannibalistic way of life in television land. The cannibalism springs from a follow-the-leader search, not for quality, but for numbers in the network rating race." This is a businesslike summation — after all, *U. S. News and World Report* is the chief organ of American business. The article noted that the people who work in television will not scorn even the most banal offerings if, from their point of view, it is what viewers want. And it stressed that the creators of such programs have no thought in mind but how to hold on to their jobs with the networks. Everyone tries to outdo the other networks in attracting viewers, and this means "trying to outdo each other in drivel and bad taste." The terms used by this respected and ordinarily restrained magazine to describe the present state of things are surprisingly strong: "Congress wouldn't stand still for a minute if a prominent industry pocketed a billion dollars in pretax profits ... while piping sewage into our rivers and lakes. Yet neither Congress nor the Federal Communications Commission raises an eyebrow while commercial TV stations pipe their raw 'entertainment' garbage into American homes, polluting our minds."

The vicissitudes of the struggle for profits on the battlefield of television have inspired many books and films. They tell about the networks' fierce competition for viewers (that is, for money), about the grim fight for promotion (that is, for money), and about the debilitating work that saps the minds and spirits of those who have sold their talents and thereby lost them. At the same time, they usually portray the luxurious existence of those who have reached the top. Readers and movie audiences are shown a world peopled with ravishing temptresses and men with iron wills (although the behavior is, to say the least,

indecorous). These books and films also paint a convincing picture of the vast influence television magnates exercise on national life, both through their control of the networks and through their immense wealth.

One of the most widely acclaimed American films of recent years, *Network*, based its plot on the inner workings of television. A fourth television company, UBS, enters the battle of the other three. Its evening news anchorman, Bill Howard, falls victim to the Nielsen ratings, which show that his popularity with viewers is waning. Misfortunes come in pairs: Bill is having personal troubles too. Losing all hope, he suddenly announces on the air, to a nationwide audience, that he is through with all the silly chatter — he has decided to shoot himself. The management of UBS is horrified, stunned. But the head of the news department, Diana Christiansen, comes up with a way to turn the scandal into profits. It seems that Howard's outburst has revived viewers interest in him, as is instantly reflected in his ratings. The quick-witted Ms. Christiansen suggests giving him a show of his own. The former anchorman is turned into a buffoon. But after a while his ratings begin to slip once again. Then Ms. Christiansen, always on the lookout for ways to increase the company's profits, produces a diabolical plan to have him assassinated on the air, in full view of the folks at home. Before the eyes of millions, on millions of color television screens, a horrifying scene is enacted: hired killers fire bullet after bullet into Howard's body, he dies, and the murderers escape. The Nielsen ratings show an immediate upsurge in the popularity of UBC.

I have already quoted a sharply negative appraisal of American television from *U. S. News and World Report*, a source that could hardly be accused of bias against the American way of life. Nonetheless, it goes too far in condemning all American television as drivel. I would put it differently, more cautiously. The general level of quality in American television leaves much to be desired, but there are undoubtedly some very good programs. The distance that separates the best from the worst is surprisingly wide.

The talk show is an extremely popular form of television entertainment in the USA. This genre, as I understand it, includes commentary, interviews, conversations among several guests, and appearances by experts and public figures. Even during the vastly popular variety shows, the master of ceremonies (who takes a far more active part in the proceedings than is customary in our own similar programs) spends a great

deal of time chatting with the audience and the performers — half the show, if not more.

The most notable thing about television commentators and those who appear in interviews and discussions is their ability to seem at ease. This ability is not confined to the television professionals; it is shared by most of the people they talk to, whatever their walk of life. The free and easy atmosphere of such programs comes as a pleasant surprise. Even in live on-the-scene reports people suddenly confronted with questions by television reporters answer calmly and coherently, without the awkwardness and embarrassment they might be expected to feel in front of the cameras. This probably comes from the active way television has penetrated into American life, from the exceedingly large number of on-the-scene reports it makes. Americans have grown accustomed not only to television sets but also to television cameras and reporters, who often invite themselves into people's homes, places of work, and so on.

The television commentators begin their conversation with Americans on the early morning news shows. These are conducted by several persons, a news team, whose faces are already familiar to viewers. They not only report the news but also trade comments among themselves and address remarks to the audience. These programs include several commentaries, and of course a number of on-the-scene reports. All in all they resemble our own evening news program, but they last a whole hour, and are immediately followed by a sort of sequel, also an hour long. These programs devote considerable attention to the weather, supplying up-to-the-minute information at intervals and also a detailed forecast using various maps and diagrams as well as photographs from weather satellites. Even this specialized information is conveyed in a lively manner that makes viewers at home into participants. Talk shows account for most of television programming during the morning and afternoon hours; in the evening they give way to films, entertainment programs, and sporting events.

The three major networks all schedule children's programs every morning: cartoons, puppet shows, and plays. Among these are old favorites that youngsters have come to know and expect. The people who produce these programs and perform on them show great imagination and high professionalism. Many grown-ups also enjoy the sparkling wit and high spirits of children's shows. There is an obvious paradox to be noted here: American television, the nation's head teacher, gets off to a good start with the youngest classes, but then, when it

turns to the other age groups, loses all its best qualities. Of course there are some worthwhile adult programs too, but by and large the fare offered for children is incomparably better.

In the mornings the viewer is also invited to listen in on conversations on a wide range of topics. Religion and medicine are the favorites, but public affairs, world events, law, education, and other themes are included too. These programs usually feature a host and two or three outside guests.

The morning news programs bring the first interviews of the day. The subjects are people of all sorts, and the television reporters show great skill in getting to the heart of what interests them, boldly — oftentimes brazenly — pressing ahead with questions about the deep feelings and personal lives of others. It is success as an interviewer that makes a star of an ordinary television newsperson.

The stars of television journalism are extraordinarily popular in the USA, and their annual earnings are in the hundreds of thousands. Barbara Walters of ABC makes the most of all — one million dollars a year. She is remarkably proficient at getting even the most difficult subjects to talk. What is more, the people Walters interviews are usually important and knowledgeable in their fields, and she clearly puts considerable effort into preparing for each of these conversations.

The second most notable feature of American television, after the great number of talk shows, is the quantity of live on-the-scene reports and their high quality from the purely professional point of view. Particularly impressive in recent years has been the coverage of space flights, an area in which American television has scored many triumphs. No sooner, for example, does a manned satellite returning to earth emerge from the dense layers of the atmosphere than it is picked up by the television cameras and relayed to viewing screens. Millions watch every step in the complex and at times suspenseful process of splashing down and bringing the astronauts on board the ships that have come to meet them. There have also been outstanding achievements in transmissions from outer space.

American television broke all its records for duration of live coverage, and attracted millions of viewers, during the height of the Watergate affair. There had been any number of similar political scandals in the past, but never one of such epic dimensions. There can be no doubt, moreover, that television did much to arouse Americans' interest in the case.

I myself was a witness to how the whole country spent hour after hour watching live broadcasts of the Senate in-

vestigating committee at work. A large part of the appeal these hearings had was due, once again, to Americans' ability to speak up before the television cameras. America was staging a grand spectacle for itself, and relishing every minute of it. Senators and lawyers, the accused, their relations, the men and women called on to give testimony — all were superb at playing their roles in the Watergate "show." There were memorable collisions and comical moments in plenty, but all the participants, no matter how difficult or advantageous their positions, were aware above all that they were actors in a great national drama. They saw the cameras trained on them and knew that millions of their fellow countrymen were hanging on their every word and gesture.

Coverage of the election campaigns is another instance of how television turns politics into show business. There are backstage producers at the national conventions, just as there are backstage decision-makers — but not in the same place! Putting on a political show, like putting on an entertainment show, is an expensive proposition. The Democratic and Republican parties spend tens of millions for television in election years.

One well-known American journalist calls television a device for persuading and duping the American people, for distracting them from unpleasant realities, and for selling them deodorant.

It is old hat, of course, to complain about the commercials on American television, but the subject simply cannot be avoided. Business pays big money for advertising time. The more popular the program, the more the networks charge to insert a commercial into it. Even live coverage of space flights — to say nothing of movies and other programs — may be interrupted at the most dramatic moment for a message from the sponsors.

Commercials are more than a nuisance. The real trouble is that they draw Americans into the whirlpool of the consumer philosophy. Not everyone gets caught, of course, but a fact is a fact: advertising on such a scale inevitably has a bad effect on those who are subjected to it.

Television is utterly in the power of the advertisers. They influence not only the tastes and day-to-day outlook of viewers (the consumer philosophy) but also the quality of the programs themselves. A curious form of "commercial" is sometimes heard on American television: "The following program will be interrupted only once for commercial messages." This means something truly extraordinary is about to be aired, something

epoch-making. Advertising is the umbilical cord that ties American television to business.

Americans regard excessive violence as one of the main faults of television programming in their country. The attention of the entire nation was drawn to this problem once again at the trial of a teenaged boy in Florida who had committed a brutal murder. It was the contention of the boy's lawyer that he had acted under the overwhelming influence of the things he had seen on television. This cogent argument attracted widespread notice, and even though the court rejected it in the end, it raised a fresh outcry against the violence that inundates America's television screens.

During the years he spends in school, the average young American sees something like eighteen thousand murders on television. This is an official figure; it comes from the report compiled for a House subcommittee.

Weekly variety shows continue to be vastly popular. Their hosts are among the best known figures in entertainment; they are like old acquaintances to viewers. In America, variety shows aim for more than twenty or thirty weeks on the air. The people who put them together hope they will continue to be popular for many seasons. The Ed Sullivan show, for example, aired on Sunday evenings for twenty-three years.

As has been pointed out already, talk shows occupy a goodly portion of each broadcasting day. In the battle for viewers the various companies sometimes resort to odd tactics. They may, for instance, bring a former stripper into the studio and ask detailed questions about her life. The company that did this was ABC, which has already far outdistanced its competitors. Sherry Britton, now a middle-aged woman, told how she had been forced to go into burlesque at age fifteen by poverty — there was simply nothing else she could do. Her childhood was spent in an orphanage. The host, as usual, did not spare the feelings of his guest and showed no embarrassment himself. The upshot of the whole conversation was that Sherry Britton, whose life had begun in harsh and unlovely circumstances (she says that stripping was always distasteful to her), is now quite well off, with her own home and a family. She has earned all the things she never had as a child, earned them by practicing her trade, whatever we may think of it. What is the moral to be drawn from such a broadcast?

Morality and the Dollar

In the late 50s, when I made my first acquaintance with the United States, I found myself thrust straight off into the bosom of an American family. The organizers of the extended trip around the USA that I was on announced right from the beginning that we would be living in private homes rather than hotels. My interest in America's people dates from that time. This is why I have titled my book *The Americans* rather than *America*. When the subject is people, the important thing is to look at their interrelations in love, marriage, the family, and so on.

It has been known since ancient times that everything passes, everything changes. In our day this inevitable process has perceptibly accelerated. The Americans of today are not the same people I got to know more than a quarter-century ago. This is not just my opinion, either. It is confirmed by the American press and American statistics.

I was a witness to the baby boom of the 50s, which some say was a reaction to the world war that had ended a few years earlier. Back then most people married young, at eighteen or nineteen, and had three or four babies in the next few years. How well I remember the happy picture of those youthful mothers and fathers surrounded by their progeny! Things are different today. The birth rate is declining; young couples are in no hurry to burden themselves with large families. The 1980 census showed that American women are waiting longer and longer to get married. In 1970, thirty-six percent of the women aged twenty to twenty-four were unmarried; in 1980, nearly half the women in this age group were unmarried. In 1970, ninety-two Americans in a thousand were divorced; this number has now risen to almost two hundred.

What is the reason for these changes? *Time* magazine writes: "After at least a decade of the famous Sexual Revolution, it is often assumed that most Americans have entered a state known as the New Morality. It is a condition in which pleasure is the principle, living in sin is no sin, and more or less anything, between consenting adults, goes." This is a bold generalization — perhaps too bold. There is much disagreement among Americans over the "revolution" in public morality. The young (at least most of them) welcome it, while middle-aged and older people are more sceptical. Even among young people, however, there is no unanimity.

Take Ms. Linda Gams for example. She is a teacher, twenty-

five years old, married for two years. She and her present husband lived together for a year before they got married. It might be expected that having begun her own family life in a not exactly traditional way, she would take a free-and-easy attitude on such questions. But here is what she has to say: "Intellectually, I think it's fine to sleep around. But emotionally I'd be very, very upset if Bob slept with another woman. I wish I could be more liberated about this. I always felt I had conquered this until I started living with Bob and got dependent on him." A young woman who gave her name as Joan, formerly married to a Chicago psychologist, puts things even more plainly. "A lot of people accept intellectually that their spouse will probably have an extramarital affair," she says. In fact, her own husband had always been an advocate of "open marriage." But when she had an affair herself, and he found out about it, a divorce resulted. "It's easy to be glib about it when it's not happening to you," Joan comments. That is putting it aptly — and poignantly!

Now let us hear what older people have to say. Harry, from Detroit, has a twenty-six-year-old daughter in New York. "I know what is going on with my daughter," he admits, "but I don't want to discuss it with her.... This generation has no qualms about sharing a bedroom before marriage. I accept the right of young women to make that decision, but I don't see that they are much happier. And it's very difficult for me. I have a lot of personal feeling on it." Kathy Lance, a graduate student from Kansas, says: "When I first told my parents I had a new roommate, they immediately knew what was going on.... My mother's first words were, 'Don't do all the cooking and cleaning.' But she is very disappointed. She just feels that it's not really right. She likes to say things like, "With your brains, you should be using your college education.' She would like for me to teach school, then get married and have children."

This sort of thing makes painful listening. You feel sorry for the young people, sorry for their elders. Of course it would be better if children paid more attention to what their parents said. But then, that is an age-old problem. The brief remarks quoted, the words of just four Americans, contain a whole world of passions and inner turmoil. What contradictory sentiments they express! And strange though it might seem, those sentiments are fully borne out by statistics. Beginning with the early 70s, there was a decline in the number of marriages in the USA and an increase in the rate of divorce. This would appear to be proof positive that the Sexual Revolution was having its effect.

But we must not jump to conclusions. After 1977, the number of marriages began to increase, although the rate of divorce continued to climb. These figures seem every bit as conflicting as the feelings in the words quoted above. But there is an explanation: from 1960 to the end of the 70s, the number of people entering into second marriages tripled. This means that young people who had suffered in ill-considered experiments with the new morality were looking for a refuge in marriage and the family, that is, in traditional institutions, rather than in slogans about absolute freedom to love. Psychologist Donald Johnson of the University of Colorado comments: "The promiscuity concept is dying out like crazy. People are talking about fidelity. It's a revolution against loneliness."

To me the last remark seems particularly telling. Loneliness is the inevitable and terrible punishment for the attitude that "anything goes." Nor is it the only punishment. The Reverend Jesse Jackson, known as both a religious and a political leader, rightly points out that the "new morality" draws young people away from the social struggle and active participation in public life. "Were they marching for full employment?" he asks about its youthful advocates. "Were they marching to rebuild cities? No, the thrust was to lower the drinking age to 18, to legalize marijuana, to engage in sex and accept no responsibility for the baby."

Here, then, is a curios fact, one that is not always perceived right away. The new morality has a negative social impact; it lowers the political activity of young people, turns them aside from the mainstream of life and the struggle for progress. Who benefits, then? The champions and propagandists of the bourgeois order, if no one else. And also those who have used the new morality as a foundation for a lucrative business.

As we have seen, not all Americans are enthusiastic about the so-called sexual revolution. Meanwhile, though, a broad and carefully planned assault is being mounted against all aspects of daily life. Depravity and shamelessness have been put on an industrial footing. So far all attempts to halt the onslaught have failed for the simple reason that the trade in filth makes billions for the businessmen who control it. With every passing year, subject matter that not long ago would have been considered indecent makes greater inroads on the ordinary press, television, and films. As if that were not enough, business is booming in the multifaceted pornography trade. The ten leading pornographic magazines in the USA (published legally and distributed through regular channels) have a total circulation of

sixteen million and net their owners some five hundred million dollars each year. Pornographic films bring even larger sums. They are inexpensive to make: there is no need to pay millions for big-name stars, and production costs are minimal since most of the action takes place in ordinary household surroundings. A typical example is the notorious *Deep Throat*, which cost its makers a mere twenty-five thousand dollars (in contrast to the millions invested in most feature films) and returned fifty million in profits.

It would be a sheer impossibility to calculate how many millions the pornographers rake in each year. The greater part of the business is in the hands of organized crime, which has not yet been prevailed upon to submit financial reports on its activities. The legal, above-ground part of the business, conducted in full public view, is so broad and diversified that even the most sophisticated computers would be unable to work out precisely its volume and profit margin. The figure of four billion dollars a year has appeared in the American press, but this is no better than a guess, and is agreed to be too low.

The manufacturers of pornography have long since moved up from seedy pocket editions and photo brochures to newspapers. These productions are just like regular newspapers in format, size, and circulation. They are sold at the same newsstands (for twenty or thirty cents) and also from numberless coin-operated vending machines.

Here is a typical specimen. Occupying the entire front page is a pornographic photograph, intended no doubt to attract the attention of potential buyers. In calling this picture pornographic, I do not mean that it is a nude portrait. It goes beyond even the most daring of those. Similar photographs and drawings are liberally sprinkled over the other pages too. The printed text is the worst sort of smut; the authors strike intellectual poses or indulge in vulgar humor. In addition to all this, the paper contains a multitude of "personals." These are paid advertisements, complete with real names, addresses, and telephone numbers, inviting anyone interested to take part in orgies and every sort of perversion. It may be difficult to believe that such things really exist. But they do. My specimen is called *Biplane*, and it can be bought right in the heart of New York, at a newsstand. It gives the telephone number of the editorial offices and their address: 210 Fifth Avenue, New York, 10010.

It might be thought that *Biplane* is an extreme case, an aberration. Not so. Such newspapers, I repeat, can be found

everywhere in the USA. The *Hollywood Press* is published at the other end of the country, in California. It has twenty-four pages, and costs twenty-five cents. A photograph of a naked woman shares the front page with several advertisements for pornographic films, which have their own photographs and drawings. The masthead appears on the second page, set off by a black border. It gives the address of the editorial offices (1260 Northwestern Avenue, Hollywood, California, 90029), their telephone number, and the names and positions of the staff members. Pages two through eight are taken up with standard yellow journalism: gossip and rumors about the stars of stage, screen and sports, plus crimes, trials, and the like. On page nine the paper gets down to its real business. The entertainment section gives the addresses of thirty-one theaters that show pornographic films. Here too are the advertisements for houses of prostitution. Such operations are officially illegal in the USA, so they are disguised under various enticing charades: "New Girls—W. L. A. Okinawa," "Massage. Sauna," "Oriental Girls. Oriental Massage," and so on. Most of this page is taken up by a "research" article titled "Pornography and Mental Health." It talks about incest, cites examples, and quotes the opinions of daughters, mothers, sons, and fathers. Following it is another piece of "scholarship" on the subject of "The Single Woman's Sex Interests."

All of page ten is given up to an advertisement for a house of prostitution. A garland of photographs — naked girls — stretches clear across it. The address, telephone number, and prices of the house are in bold print. The following pages are filled with similar advertisements, with pictures of naked girls and invitations to come join the fun. The single issue I have described here had one hundred and thirty such illustrated advertisements, and two hundred and eighty-eight more without illustrations — over four hundred in all!

"Hold on!" the amazed reader might exclaim. "How could there be so many houses of prostitution in just one area? Could it be that Hollywood is inhabited entirely by sexual maniacs?" But such is not the case. The situation in Hollywood is typical. The city government of Los Angeles (Hollywood's next-door neighbor) has proposed the following measure to curb prostitution and public immorality: no brothel should be allowed to operate within a radius of one hundred and fifty yards of a church, and each such business should be at least three hundred yards distant from all others. So we see

that the contents of the pornographic newspaper, however astounding, are no more than a mirror of the existing realities.

Filthy newspapers are only the foundation of the gigantic pyramid of the USA's pornographic publishing industry. One of the leaders in this highly specialized field is *Playboy*, a thick monthly magazine with a circulation of some seven million. The name alone tells a good deal. It seems to say that *Playboy* is meant to help affluent, mindless, and corrupt wastrels with advice on the best and most stylish ways to wallow in filth and dirty as many others as they can while doing it. This is, indeed, one of *Playboy*'s purposes. But its overall program, its goal and intent, goes much farther. *Playboy* is a tool fashioned to pervert society with its decadent philosophy, to lead people away from true values and reduce them to a state that can only be described as bestial, to distract them from political and social problems, from struggle and creativity, and turn them into near animals moved by only two instincts: hunger and sexual desire. But the word "animal" is not really fair: the publishers of *Playboy* want to turn people into depraved sexual monsters that would be a disgrace not only to humanity but to any species on earth. Incurably impotent in mind and spirit, the people who write for *Playboy* exercise themselves in mocking everything that makes us human: love, a sense of dignity, faithfulness to ideals, enthusiasm for work, and so on.

Playboy turns a blind eye not only to the individual's duty towards society, but also to such concepts as love, marriage, and family. In their place it sets up promiscuity — the basis of the so-called Playboy philosophy, which finds expression on the pages of the magazine, and likewise in the "Hefner empire." Once he had made his fortune in the publishing industry, Hugh Hefner decided to give his readers a real-life demonstration of the way of life he advocates. Playboy clubs were set up all over America, and then in many other Western countries. Their symbol, and main attraction, are the "bunnies"— young women dressed in scanty rabbit costumes, complete with floppy ears. They wait on the members of the Playboy clubs and summon them into the world where Hefner wants them to live.

The image of porn-king Hefner is, of course, one of the pillars of the Playboy philosophy, a vivid example, an invitation for everyone to become a subject of his "empire." Hefner is frequently seen in other — non-pornographic — American publications. He gets the same sort of publicity accorded

to the stars. Here, for example, is a series of color photographs from *Time*: Hefner aboard his personal jet (which features an enormous bed), receiving guests at his California estate, with a "bunny" on his lap, and so on. There is nothing haphazard about this kind of advertising. The Hefner "empire" is valued at approximately $100 million, which in itself is proof of *Playboy*'s success in attracting readers and admirers. Still, it is only the first among many. There are scores of other magazines like it in the USA. Their combined effect in poisoning the moral atmosphere can well be imagined.

Among *Playboy*'s imitators is *Penthouse*, which devoted several pages in a recent issue to the life and activities of a New York pimp called Silky. Readers were invited to drool over his income, his fancy Cadillac, his superbly tailored clothes, his plush apartment, and, of course, the prostitutes who work for him. The girls are young and gorgeous. And most of all, they worship their pimp. Silky does not see himself that way, though. He calls himself a businessman.

Yes, Silky and Hefner are businessmen, just like Morgan and Du Pont. And that is why a society ruled by capital cannot rid itself of them.

Here, it would seem, the peddlers of printed smut and depravity have reached the nadir, the limit. What more could anyone possibly invent? But it seems there was something after all. The latest is magazines that feature not naked women, but naked men — for female playboys, as it were. It was Burt Reynolds who first posed for such a photograph in a women's magazine. He reaped a fortune in publicity, as well as monetary benefits, from the sensation.

In addition to the countless periodicals trafficking in filth, there are pornographic books, photo albums, and postcards. These are sold freely and openly throughout the United States. There are stores specializing in such products, but they can also be bought at regular book stores and newsstands, and in the so-called sex shops, which also carry various devices and gimmicks that could only come from the sick imagination of a sexual psychopath. The sex shops are perfectly legal. Their "goods" are set out in display windows for all to see. They also offer "peep shows": customers can drop a coin into a machine and watch a sex film lasting five or ten minutes. The same sort of thing is shown on full-sized screens at regular movie theaters. Many of them present pornographic "loops" that run without interruption, twenty-four hours a day. No one in the USA puts any limitation on their content.

On the next step up (in price, not in form or content) are sex shows of every description, where sexual acts are performed not on screen but by live actors. Once again, no one in the USA forbids them or places any limitations on them.

All the different businesses described are usually situated in fashionable downtown areas, where everybody can see them. In New York the center of the pornographic sewer is Times Square, the heart of Broadway. Thousands of people pass through Times Square each day, most of them with no intention of visiting the dens of vice. They are going to work, or out on shopping trips. In the crowd are many teenagers and children, who cannot help seeing the advertising outside the pornographic movies theaters (stills from the feature being shown), the sex shops (display windows), and the sex shows (enlarged color photographs). Loud-voiced barkers stand in the doorways, which are illuminated day and night, inviting everyone interested to step right in. On the street corners stand flocks of prostitutes, marshaled by their pimps. The same scene is repeated in the centers of many other American cities as well.

In recent years, this repulsive side of the American way of life has taken on yet another dimension, perhaps the most terrible of all: child prostitution and "kiddie porn." The American press reports that there are some three hundred pornographic magazines published in the USA whose specialty is not women, or even men, but children. It is said these publications can be put out more cheaply, since children are willing to accept pocket change, candy, or ice cream in payment. And now dealers in "live merchandise" are offering boys and girls to their clients. An extensive underground organization engaged in this criminal business was recently uncovered in San Francisco. Posing as a customer, George Huegle, a police sergeant, gained admission to a house where minors, both girls and boys, were being kept as prostitutes. Huegle said prospective buyers looked the children over as if they were livestock up for auction. "Kiddie porn" was being turned out on the same premises. Huegle's description of all this in the local press produced a public outcry.

Child prostitution is the inevitable outcome of the exploitation of children in pornography. *Time* writes: "A new and alarming wave of prostitution by teen-agers and young children has struck the U.S., not only in the big cities but also in the small towns... Some of the young prostitutes live at home and turn tricks merely for pocket money. But most are runaways.

Typically, they are the products of broken homes and brutality, often inflicted by alcoholic or drug-addicted parents. They take to the streets, use their bodies for survival and then, beaten by pimps and bereft of self-esteem, live in fear of reprisal if they attempt to escape the racket." New York police estimate there are some twenty thousand runaway children in that city. Most of them are eventually forced into prostitution and become virtual slaves of the pimps. Los Angeles police say there are approximately three thousand boys and girls engaged in prostitution there.

Here are two examples from the press.

Karen is fourteen years old. She was seduced by a pimp. After a quarrel with her parents, he brought her from Minneapolis to New York. In ten weeks she earned four thousand dollars for him. Later Karen tried to run away from the pimp, and he beat her so severely that she had to be put in a hospital. Only then was she able to inform her parents of her whereabouts.

Clare is sixteen. She too comes from Minneapolis. She ran away from home, was taken in by a pimp, and went to work for him. She recalls: "He wouldn't let me come into the house unless I brought him $150 a day." In sixteen months in New York, Clare earned no less than a hundred thousand dollars for him. She was arrested forty-two times for prostitution (which is illegal in the USA) but never sent to jail. In the end she tried to run away from her pimp and return home, but he beat her so badly that she was hospitalized for an extended period.

Both these girls began as runaways. Statistics show this phenomenon is taking on new dimensions in the USA: at present, some eight hundred thousand children run away from home each year. The reasons are many, but one of the most important is the overall decline of morals. Youngsters are not leaving their families in search of adventure, or to travel to faraway places, but simply to escape misfortune. In most instances, though, it is out of the frying pan and into the fire. Bob Husbands, a specialist in youth crimes from Houston, says most runaways come from families where something has gone fundamentally wrong.

There is yet another frightening aspect of the decline of morals in America — intoxication with narcotics. This disease is now omnipresent in the USA. It has penetrated into colleges, and even into schools. *U.S. News and World Report* writes that high-school students are more likely to take up marijuana than cigarettes. I cannot recall ever having talked with an American for any length of time without being asked whether the same problem exists in the Soviet Union. The question springs from the concern over drug addiction experienced by everyone in the USA, especially by the parents of growing children, who most easily fall prey.

The traffic in narcotics is entirely controlled by organized crime, which extracts immense profits from it. That is why there is no opposing force in the United States capable of putting an end to widespread drug abuse. *Time* reports that forty-two million people in the USA smoke marijuana, and some two million use cocaine. A special Congressional committee found that thirty percent of the American troops in Vietnam (some one hundred and fifty thousand individuals) were drug addicts in the full meaning of the term. According to figures from the U.S. Navy, fifteen percent of crew members on submarines are regular marijuana users.

U.S. News and World Report writes: "The U.S. armed forces are mounting a new battle against an old enemy that they hoped had been left behind in Vietnam six years ago. The enemy: heroin, cocaine, marijuana, amphetamines and other potentially dangerous drugs." It goes on to say that some thirty percent of America's military personnel smoke marijuana, and ten percent use more potent drugs. The magazine also reports that in just one year 1,474 individuals in units directly involved with nuclear weapons were dismissed because of drug violations. Just imagine it: a dope fiend with his finger on the nuclear trigger! It might seem this is the end, but there are still other horrifying facts to be cited.

At Camp David, the presidential retreat outside Washington, I was greatly impressed by the formidable guards. They are hand-picked Marines, the cream of the cream of the American armed forces. Shortly thereafter, I learned to my great surprise that a large number of them had been caught smoking marijuana and removed from the presidential guard. Not long ago there was a similar incident in the White House itself. Peter Bourne, President Carter's special assistant on drug abuse, not only smoked marijuana himself but also supplied narcotics to other members of the White House staff. He was forced to resign.

Is there nothing that could be done to combat the epidemic of drug abuse in the USA? I was led to ponder this question by America's campaign against a far less disastrous vice — tobacco smoking. Considerable forces have been mustered for

the fight, and this of course is a good thing in itself, but it seems a shame no one in the USA has been able to launch a similar drive against drug abuse.

The fight against smoking, which has been going on for a long time in the USA, has taken on new and curious forms. Great efforts have been made by the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, and the American Lung Association. Special mention should be made of their multimillion-dollar no-smoking campaigns. At present cigarette advertising has been banned from television and radio, and advertisements in the press must include the words: "Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health." Thirty states have passed laws making it illegal to smoke in public places. These and similar measures create a climate in which the force of public opinion is directed against tobacco use.

As I was strolling on an ordinary weekday through Union Square in San Francisco, a little island of greenery in the great ocean of downtown asphalt, I came upon some workers putting up a stage. When I asked them what it was for, I was informed it would be used in the festivities for "No-Smoking Thursday." The American Cancer Society was calling on all smokers in America to give up their bad habit for just one Thursday. Jack Landers, head of the local division of the society, explained the idea behind the drive: "We know that if people can give up smoking for a single day, 20 per cent of the total number have a chance of giving up cigarettes for good."

Hundreds of citizens gathered in Union Square on the appointed day. Everything was done in the traditional American show-business style. As music played, local television celebrities trudged around a giant ashtray, trampling underfoot countless packs of cigarettes thrown there by the audience. (True, the *San Francisco Chronicle* did note acidly that most of the packs were empty.) Even belly-dancers were called in to help in the battle against smoking. The show lasted for something like on hour, after which a doctor active in the local cancer society addressed the audience. He spoke of the problem as a whole, and of his personal experience as a former two-pack-a-day smoker. Similar rallies were held in many other American cities. There can be no doubt that all over America people were confronting themselves with the question. To smoke, or not to smoke?

Americans, by the way, show great concern for their health — as is perfectly natural. I have spoken of the campaign against smoking, and this reminds me of the national craze

for jogging. We ourselves, of course, are not unacquainted with it. More and more people in the USSR have taken up jogging, with undeniably desirable results. But in the USA this enthusiasm has become a truly national phenomenon. You see Americans running at all times of the day, and even at night. Men, women, children, and old people run, and not only along the boulevards and through the city parks, but even on downtown streets.

As this salubrious habit has spread it has taken on the nature of a mass movement, winning still more converts to jogging. I was amazed to see several thousand citizens of Los Angeles in track suits cram one of the city's thoroughfares for a ten-kilometer run from Seventh Avenue to the Los Angeles Colosseum. Traffic stopped completely, and the runners were escorted by motorcycle police. Thousands of people cheered from the sidewalks. Many of the runners were women. *Time* notes that all over the country more and more women are taking up jogging.

Mass races like the one I saw in Los Angeles are now being scheduled regularly in other American cities as well, and women are taking a very active part in them. Not long ago things were different. It was only in 1972, for instance, that women were admitted to competition in the venerable Boston Marathon. Several hundred women took part in an autumn race in New York, and in many cities women are now organizing their own running events.

I think the joggers on the streets make America's cities more cheerful, if only because they prove there are still many people whose daily lives have not been ruined by the vice industry. Of course not everyone in the USA falls as low as the pathological extremes and deviations propagandized, advertised, and inculcated by the pornography merchants. In one way or another, though, their business has penetrated everywhere, poisoning the moral atmosphere and weakening the nation's moral fiber. One of the symptoms of this endemic plague is the rise and common acceptance of the term permissiveness. In the context of morality, it means that everything is permitted, with the full complicity of the authorities, while society, powerless to combat the evil, remains indifferent.

Many Americans have no sort of family library whatever, and as a rule two or three bookshelves, with two or three dozen books, are all that can be found even in the apartments of people who consider themselves educated. In such a library, a good half the books are usually about sexual technique.

All the fine points are discussed from different points of view, as applied to different age groups, and countless prescriptions and bits of advice are offered. You get the impression that people are trying to compensate for their spiritual impotence by turning man into a machine for sexual pleasure, which will be greater as the mechanical stimuli applied become more sophisticated. It is not at all surprising to find various schemes, diagrams, and tables interspersed with the advice and instructions these books give. And this pseudo-scientific approach is not confined to books. Sexual techniques are widely and eagerly discussed in the press and on radio and television. Here is an example — one of many that could be brought forward.

The host of a popular talk show is interviewing the head of a sexual therapy clinic and two of her assistants. The program is being broadcast by ABC, the leading television network, to an audience of millions. The head of the clinic is a respectable-looking middle-aged woman; her assistants, one male and one female, are much younger. In answer to the host's question, the head of the clinic explains that it offers treatment to people who are having sexual problems. When someone comes to the clinic for help, she says, he is immediately asked to undress. The client then talks things over with several members of the staff, who are also without clothes. This is done, she explains, because it makes people more open with one another. After the consultation treatment is prescribed. Male staff members are assigned to women patients, and female staff members to male patients. Practical instruction is given in sexual techniques. This sort of thing is the job of the two young people who have come to the studio with her. "So you take care of the women patients?" the host asks the male assistant, who answers, unabashed, "Yes, and the men too." The clinic, it seems, offers a wide variety of services. Discussion of this scientifically organized brothel goes on for an entire hour. The names of the clinic's staff are given, along with its address, telephone number, and the charges for "treatment."

This is just one side of the many sides of permissiveness. The contribution made by television to ingraining it as part of the American way of life grows more significant each year. As for American films, they have long since achieved such a degree of permissiveness that many scenes from ordinary films could scarcely be outdone by hard-core pornography. I think film producers are aiming here at the lowest common denominator of taste, or hoping for a *succès de scandal*,

with the attendant box-office receipts, although of course no one would admit to such motives. Instead, all sorts of pseudo-philosophical arguments are offered. The end result, though, is that feature films come to resemble pornography. One example is the much-acclaimed film *Last Tango in Paris*. Its theme is the tragedy of loneliness. In a big city, alone among the crowds of people, lives a man nobody needs. He himself is mortally sick of everything and everyone. The makers of the film do everything possible to underscore this, resorting even to pornography to heighten the effect. To depict the despair and degradation of the central character, they show him in a number of scenes that got the film banned in some places in the West. In the USA, however, it was widely shown. If we grant the makers of the film the honesty of their intentions, were they justified or not? Can legitimate films adopt devices from the arsenal of pornography? While discussion raged over questions like these, tens of millions of people, including of course a large percentage of teenagers and young people, flocked to see the film.

Pornography has also stepped forth boldly onto the boards of the theatrical stage. Take for example *O Calcutta*, which has been produced in many places in the West. I saw it in New York, at the Edison theater. It consists of several skits — miniature one-act plays, they might be called. It could also be said that the show is a take-off on the so-called new morality and the "Sexual Revolution." To begin with, the actors and actresses are all naked. In many of the scenes, they do (or pretend to do) the same sort of things that are done in pornographic films and on the stages of night-clubs. There is even a sketch about a sexual therapy "clinic" like the one described above. The actors, with a maximum of realism, show just what goes on between the patients and the staff. Is this useful satire, or just pornography in reverse? The latter, of course, is closer to the truth.

The press too contributes its share to the debasement of society, particularly by reviewing, with a knowledgeable air, the various new pornographic plays and films. It does not condemn these productions. It evaluates them and recommends the novelties. It was thanks to the press that *Deep Throat*, a shabby and totally idiotic pornographic film, achieved truly phenomenal notoriety, and the "actress" who played the main role advanced to the front rank of stardom. Newspapers and magazines, in tribute to the mania for permissiveness, devote much space to highly questionable material about sexual depravity.

Let us return to the subject of permissiveness and consider an example of its consequences. I was walking with a young teacher through the noisy, crowded corridors of an American school during a change of classes. Suddenly I noticed, over by one wall, a boy and a girl of about fourteen locked in a passionate embrace. The couple were oblivious to everything around them, and evidently the other children were equally oblivious to them. "What is that supposed to be?" I asked the teacher in amazement. She glanced at the pair and answered calmly, "I suppose it's love." And we went our way down the corridor.

Here is a comment from the *New York Post* about a new film (officially rated non-pornographic): "*First Love* is a playpen-porn movie, an infantile exploration of sexual activity that might be of interest to 15-year olds." The reviewer would not dream of condemning such a film on moral grounds. Instead he discusses, in a businesslike way, the acting of the adults and adolescents, the directing, the camera work, and so on.

The *Reader's Digest* reports that each year more than two hundred thousand underage girls in the United States become mothers. It also notes that the number of pregnancies in this age group far exceeds the number of actual births. Further data from the *Reader's Digest*: only eleven percent of underage mothers graduate from high school, and the suicide rate among them is seven times higher than among girls the same age who do not have children.

Adults too suffer from the deterioration of the social climate. Of course there are those in the USA who oppose the upsurge of pornography and demand that the criminals who have made a multibillion dollar industry out of corrupting the nation be called to account. But so far that industry's immense profits have outweighed all efforts in this direction. Still, officialdom cannot ignore that many Americans (a virtual majority of the people) are filled with indignation at the growing might of the pornography industry. The question has even been brought before the United States Supreme Court. The justices pondered long and hard, but could do nothing.

As a conclusion to our discussion of the moral climate in the USA, I would like to describe two scenes from real life. They seem outrageous to us, but few people in the USA would be surprised by them.

The first scene is set in a school.

A massive oaken door with ornately carved letters: "Board

of Directors." Just below this inscription a piece of cardboard, with neat lettering in india ink, has been affixed with thumbtacks: "Admissions."

Dozens of excited young girls crowd around the closed door. Their fanciful hairdos glint with every color of a peacock's tail, and they cluck and fuss like sleepy hens. At some distance stands a group of parents, mostly fathers.

This scene takes place in Los Angeles. The Pink Pussycat College is selecting a new entering class. In the president's chair sits Harry Schiller, *ex officio* head of the admissions committee.

Looking at Schiller and his colleagues, their august heads touched with professorial gray, you might feel just a bit of awe for these votaries of learning — if it were not for the strange behavior of the girls entering the room.

No sooner does the candidate set foot on the thick nylon carpet of the director's office than she strikes a provocative pose and makes sultry eyes at Schiller and the rest. Then she lets out a squeal and begins to undress. She takes as long as possible removing each garment, accompanying the performance with suggestive body movements. Finally she stands in the costume of Mother Eve.

At a sign from Schiller she climbs hurriedly back into her clothes. Meanwhile the members of the admissions committee trade whispered comments and scribble notes. Now another candidate steps across the threshold.

Despite the brisk pace of its work, the admissions committee must sit for several successive days. The worthy burghers of Los Angeles and its surrounding communities bring forward their daughters, girls who are ready for a "higher education".

The parents, as we see, are undeterred by the peculiar selection process or the high price of tuition. At the main gate to the extensive grounds of the college hangs a sign announcing that the first ten lectures cost one hundred dollars.

But every hundred invested, the college's advertising says, will return a thousand. A girl who has been through the complete course in "applied empathy" will soon be able to repay everything her parents have spent on her education. She will become a star of striptease. The institution's full name, incidentally, is the Pink Pussycat College of Striptease.

The need of business for extensive and attractive advertising is well known. It was probably more than a disinterested love of art that prompted *Time*, one of America's leading weeklies, to run a story about the school. Such, then, is the

latest development in American education, seen as it really is — *au naturel*, as they say.

And finally, a scene from public life.

Glade Memorial, one of San Francisco's most fashionable churches, is packed to overflowing. A large female chorus stands singing beside the altar. They sing sweetly and with feeling. Most of the women are young, and they twine arms around one another's waists and shoulders in a sisterly fashion.

A mood of solemnity and heartfelt friendship reigns. True, a chance visitor might be puzzled by certain details. The congregation is overwhelmingly made up of women, most of them young. The chief exceptions are the members of the press and television reporters whose numbers in such a place is also remarkable. Finally, the words of the song the choir is performing, and the smiles of the singers, hint at the indecorous: somehow it isn't quite like a hymn.

In fact, the whole congregation seems out of place. Their clothes are more brilliant and extravagant than those of ordinary parishioners, and their playful mood contrasts sharply with the stern elegance of the setting. Some of those present are decked out as if for a society rout, others have donned Boy Scout uniforms for some reason, and still others are coquettishly costumed as nuns.

Here and there a man in this flamboyant crowd attempts a flirtation, but without any luck. The offenders are brought back into line with skill and dispatch by two stocky gentlemen whom members of the press watching from the sidelines identify as bouncers from a nearby entertainment spot.

There was a need for proper decorum, too. This was an official, solemn ceremony, and its organizers and participants, following the American tradition, wanted to hold it in a place of worship. The press, in its detailed account printed the following day, named among the organizers the Association of Prostitutes of the City of Seattle, the Association of New York Prostitutes, and the leaders of a movement known as Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics (COYOTE).

The church service was prelude to a national conference of American prostitutes. The press noted that this was the first gathering of its kind ever held in the USA — at least publicly. The opening speech was made by Miss Margo Jones, the founder of COYOTE. Miss Jones told of her organization's stubborn fight to improve working conditions for women of easy virtue.

Prostitution is formally banned in the USA, and the priestesses of free love (finances aside) discussed the problem of having their trade recognized under the law. One argument advanced was that prostitutes spend so much time in the courts and on the streets that they might well be considered city employees.

That would seem a bit much. But prostitutes are truly an indispensable part of any American urban scene. This is why the conference in San Francisco, grotesque though it may seem to us, is only another quite typical manifestation of the American way of life.

Down on the Farm

During my visit to rural America, I stayed in a farmer's house, in a room on the second story. And in all my travels through the surrounding countryside I never saw a farmhouse with more than two stories. Most of the residential buildings of the little towns lost in the boundless flatlands of Illinois are also two-storied.

I came to this quiet corner of America from the Chicago airport. I climbed into a taxicab, and we sped off down the highway. Later the concrete gave way to blacktop as we turned onto a narrower road cutting through endless acres of green that looked carefully tended and even as a football field. This is the famed corn and soya belt, the breadbasket of America. The soil here is rich, and the climate favorable. The land has been farmed for over a hundred years, but it remains highly fertile. Any crop grown in the temperate zones will flourish.

Our destination was the little town of Aurora. There, the organizers of the trip had told me back in Washington, I would be met by Mrs. Passow, who would take me to her farm. I was to telephone her from Aurora and arrange the details of our meeting. We reached the town at last and pulled into a gas station. My first attempt to call the Passow farm was a failure. Two young fellows who worked at the station came to my assistance, but did no better. I decided to try my luck at another gas station. There three Americans provided me with advice as the pay phone swallowed up one coin after another. Nothing seemed to help. I was passed from one operator to another, and then another, all of them uniformly polite: "Thank you..." "I'm sorry..." In the end I was told the call could not be completed. The lines were down.

The only thing to do was to go on in my taxi. That posed a bit of a problem. With the help of local residents and the telephone operators I learned the general direction of the farm, and we set off once more through the fields of green. After an extraordinary length of time spent wandering along deserted country roads, we arrived at that maddeningly simple address: Leland, Illinois.

Mrs. Passow was greatly surprised to see me. It was her first meeting with a citizen of the Soviet Union, but what amazed her was my having come all the way by taxi. The point was not my abilities as a navigator, either, but the whopping fare I had to pay. It aggrieved both her simple good-heartedness and the profound respect for money felt by those who see in it the end product of hard work. She was quite some time getting over my being so much out of pocket.

But how was it that I came to be Mrs. Passow's guest? There are many local volunteer groups in the United States whose members, as a public service, take foreign visitors into their homes and do whatever they can to show them the country. Mrs. Passow belongs to such a group. She told me she had entertained guests from more than a hundred different countries. Of course this entails inconvenience and effort, but Mrs. Passow, like most of the elderly Americans I have met, is a person of great curiosity and energy. Her youthful enthusiasm belies her seventy years. She does exercises every morning out on the lawn, and goes to swim at a nearby pool.

Her husband is Henry Passow. At sixty-seven he still works the farm his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather worked before him. But his son does not want to continue the family tradition. He is a construction worker. Who will take over the Passow farm, then? Probably someone else. For the time being Henry, despite his age, does what he can to keep things going. He is a hard worker, laden with cares, a quintessential rural American — a type still distinct from the city folk. Henry Passow is staid and taciturn. His movements are slow, and his thoughts unhurried. He is not one for gushing optimism, and he keeps his sense of humor hidden away where not everyone can find it. He is sturdily built, heavy-limbed and clumsy. To me his sunburned, weatherbeaten face will always be the face of the American farmer. And I learned that Henry is typical not only in his appearance and demeanor, but also in the problems confronting him.

There can be no doubt that it was solely because of Mrs.

Passow's curiosity and energy (she told me, by the way, that she had never done any of the farm chores) that she was chosen to be my hostess by the people back in Washington to whom I had expressed my desire to spend some time on a farm. How could she, an avid student of human nature, miss the first chance she had ever had to meet someone from the Soviet Union?

And so there I was on the Passow farm, although if the people in Washington had seen it they probably would have sent me somewhere else. During my stay I also visited several other, more prosperous farms. What about the Passows, though? The epithet "struggling" often precedes the word farmer in American writing. Thinking of Henry Passow, I would chose another expression: "vanishing breed." Henry's son, as I have mentioned, has forsworn the life of toil that was to have been his inheritance. Henry also has a daughter, but she is married, and to a bricklayer, not a farmer. So Henry tills his fields all alone. They are broad fields too — more than a hundred hectares planted in corn and beans. I knew that single-family farms that size are nothing unusual in America, but still I wondered how Henry, at his age, managed alone. He answered simply, without the hint of a smile, that he is not alone: he has a combine, a tractor, a truck, and so on. True, when things get really busy he does sometimes hire an extra hand or two.

Henry told me about his tractor, which has numerous attachments and devices for doing every kind of farm work. He recalled how during his own lifetime small tractors gave way to bigger and bigger machines able to do more work in less time. He spoke of the constant improvements being made in attachments and other tools, and praised the universal, self-propelled combines now used to harvest corn as well as wheat.

Of course it is thanks only to the almost complete mechanization and electrification of agriculture that more than a hundred hectares can be worked by a single farmer. Even old Henry Passow can still shoulder the burden. But he complains about the cost of all that machinery: he paid over thirty thousand dollars for the corn harvesting combine, six thousand for the pickup, and another fifteen or sixteen thousand for the tractor, plow, and harrowing machine. But wait! How much does Henry make from the farm? He is not quick with his answer. The dialogue leading up to it runs more or less as follows:

what do I make? Do you know what kind of taxes we have to pay?"

"Yes, I know. But how much do you have left over after taxes?"

"It's different from year to year."

"On the average, then."

"On the average?"

There is a long pause. I am feeling a little embarrassed about my insistence, but I really do want to get this basic information out of him. At last Henry gives in:

"About ten thousand dollars a year, I guess."

Here I should say that during my visit I talked with other local farmers as well, and asked them about their incomes. Each of them, after a dialogue resembling the one above, would finally trot out that magical figure: ten thousand dollars a year. Although some of them were obviously better off than the Passows. This restraint (or secretiveness, if you will) in discussing incomes is characteristic of those who work the land. At the same time, we must not forget the instinctive caution of Americans about the tax man. Taxes really are high, and everyone wants to minimize his earnings in one way or another.

My first conversation with Henry was about farm prices. He was the one who raised the subject. It was obviously one that concerned him. The current price for produce has always been of the first importance to farmers — a weathercock of good times or bad, it might be called. It shifts constantly with the daily fluctuations in prices, and the farmer must try to choose the most advantageous moment to sell his crop.

Without any expression of gladness whatever, Henry read me figures from the newspapers. The price of wheat was up one hundred and sixty-seven percent from the previous year, and the price for live domestic fowl was up one hundred and fifty-three percent. It was obvious that the jolt would affect more than just the prices paid for farm products.

Henry and I page through some recent issues of American magazines lying on his coffee table. Here is a cartoon from *Newsweek*: a cow stands chewing dollar bills while a farmer milks pennies out of her. The same magazine also has a photograph of a farmer drowning newly hatched chicks in a tub. A madman? Not at all. Here is another magazine, *U.S. News and World Report*, with a similar photograph: a farmer and his teenaged son drowning chicks. Prices for live domestic fowl had risen one hundred and fifty-three percent, and the

manufacturers of chicken feed had responded at once with an increase in their own prices. Then the administration hoping to check inflation and rising prices, put a temporary freeze on farm prices. Now farmers were forced to destroy newly hatched chicks because it would be unprofitable to raise them.

I have said already that Henry's farm could hardly be described as thriving. Here and there you would see things that had long been in need of repairs or a fresh coat of paint. Henry hauls feed out to his sows, who have produced one hundred and nineteen piglets this year, in a bucket. Most telling of all is his car, the cherished status symbol of every self-respecting American. Henry's is long overdue for retirement. All of this is not only because there is no vigorous younger man to take over, and not only because of the ravages of inflation. Old Henry is not the man he used to be, even just a year ago. He has suffered a calamity that might overtake anybody — a major heart attack. The subject of the attack, or rather of its costs, set the Passows talking excitedly, interrupting one another, in a way I never saw them talk about anything else. Henry had been at death's door. They had put him in an intensive-care ward that cost one hundred and twenty-five dollars a day. There he spent several weeks. Later, when he was a bit better, he was transferred to another ward, at one hundred and ten dollars a day. When he was definitely on the mend, he was moved to yet another ward, this one at eighty-five dollars a day. In all he spent four months in the hospital.

Like the great majority of Americans, Henry had been paying a considerable sum each month for health and accident insurance. But he and his wife explained to me that despite all the payments through the years the heart attack had used up all their coverage. Part of Henry's stay in the hospital had to be paid for out of their savings. And of course that hurt the farm.

No matter how early I got up I would find Henry already at work when I came out of the house. Barely recovered from a grave illness, he was at work from morning to night. Moving slowly, his breath coming hard, always with a cigarette glued to his lip, he would be carrying buckets back and forth from the pigsties or taking machinery out to the barn or the silo. Soon the work would be even harder. Harvest time was approaching, and Henry would be back behind the wheel of his combine. The poor fellow was in such a bad way that he

had sworn off drink entirely, even beer. For him this was an incalculable sacrifice. At first even my visit could not shake his resolution, although like many farmers Henry is a hale fellow and *bon vivant* in his own way. It was only on the eve of my departure, which coincided with the Fourth of July — America's national holiday — that he allowed himself, with his wife's permission, to join me in a little spree.

Now I want to introduce my readers to the Passow children, who grew up on the farm but decided not to stay on and continue the work of their forefathers. First John. Right after he got out of the army he married a girl of seventeen. Instead of going back to the farm he became a construction worker. Now he has three children of his own. Henry and I went to visit him, and it seemed to me that he looked at his father with something like pity. It was obvious John was glad he had not become a farmer too. He is now a specialist in pouring cement, an essential part of any building project. And since construction work is still going on apace in America, he cannot complain of a lack of work.

The husband of the Passows' daughter Sally is a construction worker too — a bricklayer. His name is Sherman. When we arrived for our visit we found both of them at work painting the door and window casings of their newly completed house, which had only a single story, unlike almost all the other houses I saw in that part of the country. True, the house has something like a second story in its basement, which is not just a storage or utility space, but a real living area. Sherman and Sally are just under forty. They have two teenaged children, a son and a daughter. I took a liking to all four of them; they are hard-working, good-hearted people. The father adores his children, but this does not seem to have spoiled them. Sherman is a tireless workhorse, like his father-in-law. Here is what he told me during the long talk we had. (To save space I will present it in the form of a monologue.)

"You see my house? Do you have anything like it? No? But don't think I'm bragging. I'm just glad you like it. And don't think that every construction worker in America can have the same. I'm not just *any* construction worker, you see, I work like an ox. I can work day and night, Saturdays and Sundays too. Not everyone in this country is like that. There are plenty of loafers. And I'll tell you a secret about my house: I did seventy-five percent of the work myself, in the evenings and at night. I'm in the construction business, after all. I had the foundation dug and the materials

brought in. Then I raised the walls with my own hands. Sally helped, of course. We spent seven months working on it."

Sherman asked about prices in the USSR and expressed amazement at how little we pay for rent and at the free medical care available to everybody. He had nothing to say against our system or his own country's, though, until the conversation came around to his children.

"I'm not going to let them be laborers like I am," he said with feeling. "I want them to go to school, have an education. They're all good kids, smart and hardworking. I'll see to it they get through college."

While we were talking over these plans, Sherman discovered that higher education is free in the USSR. After thinking for a while he said suddenly:

"Yes, you've got it better than we do here."

After his pride in his house and his earnings, this seemed a bit out of character. Sherman explained:

"I love my son and daughter very much. And I don't mind spending a few thousand on their education. I only pray that God keep me healthy. If anything happens to me, though, they won't be able to go to college. In your country they would. That's why I say you have it better. It's more fair."

After visiting with John and Sally, the Passows' son and daughter, I began to look at their nearly empty two-storied farmhouse with different eyes. I noticed worn-out toys lying in odd corners, and other momentos of childhood. There would never be children living in the house again, I knew, and this made it sad for me. One more farmhouse, one more farm family was vanishing into the past. Soon both would be gone. The Passow farm is only one instance of an inexorable process unfolding throughout the United States. As science and technology advance, the number of farms and farmers is dropping rapidly. In 1960, 8.8 percent of the USA's population lived on the farm. In 1964 the figure was 6.8 percent, and in the 70s it fell to 4 percent. These are official government figures.

It may be that Henry Passow does not know these figures, and does not care to know them. He is the last in a line of farmers, and means to hold out as long as possible. He was clearly flattered that I not only stayed in his house but also took an interest in his vital concerns. That was why he was so willing to take me round to meet other farmers, his friends.

One of them was Robert Anderson. He and his brother run

a dairy farm. They provide feed for the fifty cows from their own land. They have electric milking machines that pump the milk straight into special cooling containers. There are machines for loading, unloading, and preparing the feed, for pouring it into the mangers, and for removing manure. The barns are equipped with running water, which is automatically heated to the right temperature before it goes into the watering troughs. The calving sheds are specially heated. And so on and on. But with all this there is still plenty of work to be done. Together the brothers can manage it, but as Robert says, they never get a day off.

It was the same with all the other farmers I met. The most striking thing about them is their industry, an inborn trait without which the drudgery would be simply unbearable. I also found that most of them had never been very far from home. Their work kept them tied down all year round. The only memories they had of distant parts came from their years in the service.

We also paid a visit to Dan Wiley, who raises corn, cows, and pigs. Things are done a little differently on his farm, which is owned by a Chicago businessman. He takes half the profit, and Wiley gets the rest. The farm is rather a large one, and so Wiley, the tenant farmer, has a hired hand — Frank Martinez, from Columbia. You might say Frank is more than a hired hand: after all, he is Dan's wife's brother. But relations between Dan and Frank are on a business footing, and Frank is paid wages. From our point of view it is not enough, considering the amount of work he does.

"Frank," I said to him jokingly, "don't you see that Dan is exploiting you? He's not paying you what you're worth."

"Oh, I know," Frank answered. "But then I'm exploiting him too."

"How is that?"

"I'm writing a book about him. Every day I get new material, stuff you couldn't buy for any kind of money."

It seems Frank is only working on the farm for a few months. He left home two years ago to wander around the world a bit and pick up impressions. Later he wants to become a writer. Looking at Dan and Frank, you see one more proof of a probably indisputable fact: it is hard for a North American and a Latin American to get along. There is a sense of wariness and dislike on both sides, though at first the two seem like good friends. Frank talks sarcastically about how his boss is "helping" him write a book, and Dan

shrugs his shoulders and traces circles in the air alongside his temple when the subject of his brother-in-law's writing comes up.

Talking with Henry Passow's neighbors, I came to see that his mood and concerns are typical of all the farmers in that part of the country. Their worries about taxes, rising prices, and inflation make them uneasy about the future. All the farmers I met were strongly in favor of developing trade relations with the Soviet Union. They see this as an aid to better relations between the USSR and the USA, and also — to some extent — as a way out of their own predicament. They know the Soviet Union as a reliable trading partner, capable of providing farmers with something they need as much as land and water and sunshine: stability and confidence.

My stay with the Passows is tied up with yet another memory of two-storied America. It was with them that I spent the Fourth of July and took part in the celebration of America's national holiday.

That morning after breakfast I drove with the Passows, in their tired old car, to the little town of Sheridan, where the residents of surrounding farms were gathering for the Independence Day festivities. The green, two-storied town met us with a strong blend of gasoline fumes and engine exhaust. Not because of the many cars that had come in for the day, though. They were standing peacefully by the curb, their engines still. Nonetheless the throb of motors filled the air. Sheridan was preparing for the go-cart races that were to be the main event of the holiday gala. The low-slung vehicles darted about everywhere on their miniature wheels, roaring fiercely and spouting blue-gray smoke. On an ordinary day the town is quiet, almost sleepy, but it was honoring America's birthday with an automotive extravaganza. There is one passion shared by skyscraper America and two-story America alike. Its components are steel brought to life by the internal combustion engine, and speed — the more the better.

The races were to last all day. The track, marked off with colored flags and empty oil drums, had been laid through the streets of the town. The junior competitions were held in the morning. Boys of ten or so, wearing racing suits and helmets, started up their engines for one last check, put them through their paces, and reached down again and again into the steel guts of the machines. The fathers were there too, fussing over the wheeled midgets, tinkering. Like the youngsters, they were worried about just one thing: a pos-

sible breakdown that could cost the race. Together with their sons they went over everything once more, making an adjustment here and there.

And now the first race is about to begin. A dozen or so carts pull up side by side on a street lined with hundreds of spectators. The starting gun is drowned out by the awful din of the engines, and everything is shrouded in dense blue smoke. The faces of the boys resemble those of astronauts as we see them on our television screens at the moment of takeoff. Lying almost flat on their backs, gripping the steering wheels of the tiny, bellowing monsters that carry them, the young racers surge forward. The winding course through the streets of the town is not an easy one. It is frightening to look at those fragile vehicles on the dangerous curves. They skid wildly, brakes screaming, and it seems that at any instant one cart will collide with another. But there is no fear in the boys' faces. Through the shock-proof plastic visors of their helmets, their eyes, which are no longer the eyes of children, stare fixedly at the track, and only at the track. At this moment each of them probably has no other thought than the course to be negotiated and the victory to be won.

Afterwards comes another race, for boys in their early teens, and then another, for senior high-school students. I asked one of the spectators during the first race:

"Couldn't there be an accident? The course seems dangerous, and there are so many carts."

"It's quite possible," was the matter-of-fact reply.

Towards evening, after the last race, there is a ceremony at which the victors receive trophies and other awards. Meanwhile, at the local hospital, surgeons were fighting to save the lives of two young men whose carts had crashed on the track.

"They'll make it," someone in the crowd informed me. "Everything will be OK."

The races were the main event of Sheridan's holiday festival, but by no means the only one. In the break between the morning and afternoon races there was a parade. At its head marched a clown, who naturally delighted the youngest onlookers. Then came a high-school band, accompanied by girls in bright costumes, bare legs flashing. This is a traditional, and indispensable, part of any American holiday celebration. Next came the two engines of the local fire department, and after them several trucks, some with *tableaux vivants* and others with bands. A note of local farming color

was provided by a cavalcade of riders and a fairly imposing column of farm machinery of all sorts.

The holiday doings had attracted crowds from the neighboring countryside. Where could they all be fed at the sacred hour of noon, when the American must have his lunch? The local authorities had hit upon a good solution. A temporary refreshment station was set up in the fire department's garage. The red trucks were rolled out onto the street, and their places taken by plain tables and chairs. Chickens and steak were barbecued at the doorway.

The final public event of the day was a display of fireworks. After that everyone was left to continue the celebration according to his own inclinations and abilities. There was dancing in the streets to deafening music from electronic amplifiers. The steps being done were up-to-the-minute, the same ones currently popular in skyscraper America.

And at last we were back in the car. We returned to the farm, where before going to bed we sat for a while in the kitchen talking over the long day that had brought us still closer together.

In School

Old Bridge is a small town in the state of New Jersey. It is what the Americans themselves have aptly nicknamed a "bedroom community": a place where the entire adult, working population is forced by the complete absence of local employment to get up early in the morning and head for jobs in neighboring cities, centers of government, business, and finance. They come home again to spend the night. There are thousands of such "bedroom communities" in the USA. But the winds of change blow even into these semi-somnolent strongholds of the traditional American way of life. I caught such a breeze right in Old Bridge, within the walls of its high school.

The school is a large one for a town of such modest size. There are two thousand students. They come from Old Bridge itself and from its outlying districts. It is a perfectly average American public high school (the USA has many private schools as well) on the four-year plan.

Old Bridge High offers many electives. Every student is free to choose among them according to his own likes and plans for the future. For example there are courses —

with lectures and practice sessions — in auto mechanics, home economics, typewriting, dental treatment techniques, cookery, painting and sculpture, history, literature, and art. The school has its own automobiles and garage. It operates a nursery school and kindergarten for local youngsters. Other facilities include a typing room with dozens of machines for practice, fully equipped modern kitchens, laundry rooms, etc., and an art studio. There are also two large gymnasiums — one for girls and one for boys.

The school also offers foreign languages: French, German, Italian, and Spanish. Once again, the choice is up to the student. Four years ago it began to offer Russian as well — a bold leap into the modern day for a town like Old Bridge. Local residents spent a long time pondering and discussing the innovation. Some feared that the study of Russian would promote the spread of Communist ideas, and worried that their quiet little green town might suddenly become Red. Others argued that Russian was an important language, and ought to be offered along with the rest.

In the end the school board decided in favor of Russian. A teacher was hired — twenty-eight-year-old Sasha Wessler. Despite her youth she had solid qualifications. She had no ties to Russia, but back in grammar school she had fallen in love with Russian literature (which she then read in English translations, of course) and decided to study the language. She even altered her given name from Sandra to Sasha, which is what everyone, even her parents, calls her now. Here is what she told me about herself:

"My ancestors came from many different countries — I even have a little Indian blood — but none of them was Russian. I studied Latin in school, and right at the time when I was making up my mind what other language to take, the first Sputnik went up. I decided on Russian right then and there. I found a school that offered it, transferred there, and studied the language for two years. My teacher suggested that after graduation I try to get a job with one of the American exhibitions traveling in the USSR. I took his advice. After special courses in Washington, I went to the Soviet Union with a communications exhibition. That trip lasted six months. At first the interpreting work was difficult, of course, but little by little I got the hang of it. Later I made another trip to the USSR with an exhibition about American architecture. Then I had a real stroke of luck: I had the opportunity to spend several months working at

a special English-language school in Moscow. The teachers there were all so friendly, and they were real experts at their job. It was there that I finally made up my mind that I wanted to be a teacher."

I can testify that Sasha Wessler chose the right profession. I attended five of her classes in Old Bridge and saw for myself how she works with students in their first, second, third, and fourth year of Russian. Sasha has something like a hundred students in all, which of course is a tribute to her abilities as a teacher. She not only knows Russian well, but loves it too, and has the ability to pass that love along to her students. It is this contagious enthusiasm that makes her lessons special.

It may be that Sasha's pedagogical methods are not strictly orthodox, but at least she never bores her students, even when conveying to them the complex mysteries of Russian grammar. The whole class is constantly involved in a lively — even witty — dialogue with the teacher. And all of the exchanges are in Russian.

"Where do you usually rest?" she asks one of her classes.

Immediately a forest of hands is raised. Everyone wants to answer. Sasha points to one boy.

"Usually in school," he answers.

The whole class laughs.

"But not in Russian class, I hope?" Sasha replies.

Other questions put to the class:

"Do any of you smoke? Is that good or bad? Do you smoke on the street? Is that polite?"

And then there are typically American questions:

"What kind of car do you drive? What color is it? What kind of car do I have?"

"A bad one," comes the half-whispered answer to the last question.

Again there are laughs. Sasha's car really is old and dilapidated.

"Describe the way I'm walking now," she says, striding up and down the aisles like a soldier on parade, bringing her heels down hard.

"Like an elephant."

It is not easy for an American to speak Russian — let alone make jokes in the language. But in Sasha Wessler's classes learning seems like a game. And I think that must be the best method to use with high-spirited young people.

In the middle of the third-year class Sasha unexpectedly

announces a five-minute break. Everyone gets coffee and a roll. This is her most able group, and there is a special affection between teacher and students.

The classroom has a distinctive look as well. A drawing of the Kremlin covers one whole wall. Beneath it, in Russian, is the motto "Let there always be sunshine." There are also Russian proverbs and snippets of children's poems by Marshak and Chukovsky. Sasha Wessler says those crystal-pure specimens of Russian verse are a great aid to learning.

But Sasha's biggest secret of success is that she does not let Russian be confined to classwork and home assignments. Russian becomes a part of her students' lives. The school has a Russian Club, complete with president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer — and of course dozens of members. The club puts out a newsletter, the *Hedgehog*, edited and staffed by students. There is also a Russian chorus with a wide repertoire of well-known Russian songs.

The success enjoyed by the Russian chorus was the start of a new undertaking: the students decided to produce their own television show, in Russian. The program, which was produced by Sasha Wessler, was called "Gorky Street"— a neat echo of the popular educational series for American pre-schoolers, *Sesame Street*.

The first production was followed by a second. Each of the shows is twenty minutes long. Portions of them were even shown on New York television. I saw both of the tapes. There were comical skits, numbers with clowns, Russian songs and dances, and above all school children speaking Russian. Everything — from costume design to camera work — was done by the students themselves. Both programs open and close with a song performed by the entire ensemble.

Hello! How're you doing?
We're going to learn and play.
Can you tell me how to get to Gorky Street?
Sunny day — it's a good day.
Speaking Russian is fun, we say.
Can you tell me how to get to Gorky Street?
Now you've heard what we're doing.
Don't you want to join the fun?
Come to dance and sing with us on Gorky Street.

All the rest are there already,
Waiting for us — let's go too.
Don't you want to come with us to Gorky Street?

Gorky Street is not an abstract idea for this chorus of American high-school students, either. Many of them have strolled along it themselves.

The students in Sasha Wessler's Russian classes had a great desire to visit the USSR. But where were they going to get the money? Some took after-school jobs — the girls in restaurants, the boys in gas stations. They spent hundreds of hours babysitting, and often got up at three in the morning to be on hand for the opening of a local bazaar where they sold used articles no longer needed at home. Dollar by dollar they built up a fund for a trip to the Soviet Union. (It was managed, naturally, by the treasurer of the school's Russian Club.) Parents, swept up by the youngsters' enthusiasm, made contributions of their own. And at last the goal was reached. Twelve students, accompanied by two teachers, boarded the plane that would take them for a two-week visit to Moscow, Leningrad, and Kiev.

Talking with trip participants in their school, I felt the distinct reflection of the inexhaustible warmth of friendship generated by their contacts with Russian youngsters their own age. Dozens of letters now travel back and forth between Old Bridge and Moscow, Leningrad, and Kiev. Old Bridge students are getting ready for another trip to the Soviet Union. And they are expecting a return visit from their Soviet friends. Soviet teachers have already been in Old Bridge.

A beginning has been made. A good beginning.

* * *

Back in New York after my trip around the United States, I had a long talk with some Columbia University professors, all of them prominent specialists in Soviet-American relations. They asked me many questions. And one of their main points, briefly put, was this: Détente, political and business ties, cooperation between scientists — all that is very well, of course. But what about unofficial Soviet-American contacts, relations between ordinary people? There was a note of challenge in their question — of reproach, if you will. So I told the professors of political science about Old Bridge High and about the friendship between Soviet and American school

children. After that there were no more questions about "simple human contacts between Soviets and Americans" and no more reproaches.

An Encounter in Los Angeles

There had never been anything like it in the history of Soviet-American relations. The National Exhibition of the USSR was opening in Los Angeles. In scope it far surpassed any Soviet exhibition ever seen in the USA. Its organizers were the USSR Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Los Angeles City Council. Preparations had long been underway. The enemies of the exhibition, of the Soviet Union, and of Soviet-American cooperation had also been busy with their schemes. I will have more to say about them later.

An advance party of some two hundred Soviet specialists and guides arrived in Los Angeles to set up the exhibits at the Convention Center, the city's main exhibition hall. The presence of such a large group from our country naturally attracted the attention of Los Angeles residents. Just look at that!— some observers seemed to be saying. They're normal people too. Interesting people, even. Out-going, easy to talk to, well-informed people.

"The Russians are here in unprecedented numbers, almost 200 of them," was the lead of a big article in the *Los Angeles Times* that went on to describe, with a certain breathless amazement, how outgoing the visitors were, how members of the group were going around the city, taking in the sights of Los Angeles and the surrounding area, and paying visits not only to organizations and institutions but also in private homes. As a backup to the last item, a list of their hosts was given: John Anson Ford (a retired civil service worker), Judge Richard Ibanez, the Reverend Thomas R. Pendell, and others. Members of the groups had even been seen having supper in a restaurant with actress Pat Li.

The local press called attention to the surprise the Soviets expressed at seeing the streets of an enormous city almost deserted at night. What was the reason? Was everyone watching television? Or were people afraid to leave their homes? The reporters who described the Soviets' surprise at the empty streets did not pull any punches in answering these questions. They also caught the embarrassment the Soviet specialists displayed when they were taken to see a show heavily spiced with

pornography. The well-meaning American hosts, themselves long accustomed to this sort of "permissiveness," were embarrassed in turn by their guests' discomfort. The reporters pointed out that the Soviets, wanting to spare the feelings of their hosts, made no open protest, although one of the visitors was heard to whisper to one of the Americans, "I've never seen anything so awful in my life."

The newspapers also printed remarks about American television: "Too many murders, murders, murders." "Not enough good concerts, very little serious music." "The news programs are livelier than their Soviet counterparts, but most of the programs are aimed at the lowest taste."

When strangers come together in an entirely unofficial, everyday setting, Americans are likely to describe what is going on as "contacts at the grass-roots level." This peculiar expression is applied to something Americans value highly, something they draw conclusions from. In Los Angeles there were contacts at the grass-roots level between the USA and the USSR.

Here for example, in the home of John Anson Ford, a retired civil service worker, sit fifteen guests from the Soviet Union. Among them are a doctor, an engineer, and office worker, and a teacher. Their American hosts include a teacher, a businessman, a real-estate dealer, and an instructor from a vocational school. There is a lively and fruitful exchange of opinions. With every passing minute the atmosphere gets warmer, and both sides show an increasing interest in the free and easy talk. At the start of the evening, by the way, Mrs. Freda Olmstead apologized for the embarrassment the Soviet guests had been subjected to at the theater — even though they were too polite to say anything themselves. But none of this dampened the cordiality of the gathering at the Ford house, which broke up only at midnight. And there were many others like it. The *Los Angeles Times* wrote that such close, friendly relations between Americans and Soviets seemed like something from a story-book. But why should they seem that way? That is how things should be if we really want détente, friendship, and cooperation.

It seems to me that the success of the exhibition in Los Angeles was to some extent predetermined by the weeks during which Soviet specialists, while completing their preparations, won the sympathy of the American public.

The show in Los Angeles occupied ten thousand square meters of floor space. Among the exhibitors were forty all-Union

and republican ministries, the USSR Academy of Sciences, the State Committee for the Utilization of Atomic Energy, Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the Ukraine and Armenia, sixteen of the USSR's leading foreign-trade associations, and numerous industrial enterprises and research institutes. The exhibits ranged from toys and consumer goods to computers and systems for space exploration. Also on display were paintings, drawings, and sculpture, hand-crafted articles, and books.

One of the most notable attractions was the diorama "Moscow: Capital of the Soviet Union." During the twenty-minute show in this pavilion, visitors watched Moscow go through all the changes of a day. They saw it glittering with evening lights that winked out one by one as night came on, and then watched as the stars and cupolas of the Kremlin flared in the sun of the new day. The enormous model was skillfully constructed to acquaint viewers with Moscow and its architectural ensembles. There were smaller, but equally well executed, dioramas of the outskirts of Voronezh, the seashore at Sochi, the Artek Young Pioneer camp, and other sites.

The opening exhibit was a photocopy of Lenin's Decree on Peace, the first legislative act of the Soviet government. The theme of peace, friendship, and creative work was then powerfully stated in a display about the provisions of the new Soviet Constitution. Americans are always impressed when they hear about the guaranteed rights enjoyed by citizens of the USSR, such as the right to work and to choose a trade or profession, the right to rest and leisure, the right to housing, the right to free medical care and education, and so on. Wherever you go in the USA, you find people talking more pointedly than ever before about rights like these.

The brotherly friendship of the Soviet people and the feeling of proletarian internationalism were basic themes of the whole exhibition. They came across with special clarity in the Ukrainian and Armenian pavilions. These two republics were among the original members brought together in a single Union state in 1922, and so it was very proper and significant that both should be independently represented at the National Exhibition of the USSR. It seemed to me that these exhibits were the most popular of all.

Visitors learned a great deal that was new to them. Most people in the USA know about the first sputnik, let us say, and about the other successes of the USSR's space program. But here too the bourgeois propaganda machine has been at

work. The Soviets threw all they had into space exploration — goes the old lie — but they are far behind in other areas. Visitors to the exhibition had a chance to see for themselves what the Soviet Union has accomplished in those "other" fields. They saw examples of the advanced technology that the USA and other leading capitalist countries buy from the USSR. They saw exhibits about the pioneering work the USSR has done in the peaceful use of atomic energy. And they saw a wide selection of the canvases of Martiros Saryan, who is indisputably one of the most notable painters of our time.

More surprises awaited on the display stands of Intourist, the Soviet agency for foreign tourism. The lies bourgeois propaganda has spun about contacts between nations are especially numerous and cunning. The Intourist exhibition countered these with hard facts: every year some four million tourists, from one hundred and fifty-five countries, visit the USSR, and some three million Soviet citizens take trips to one hundred and thirty different countries. Intourist representatives were on hand to discuss travel arrangements. For many people a visit to the exhibition became a first step towards making a trip to the USSR.

There was more to the exhibition than the contents of its display cases, though. There were folk artists at work, and fashion shows featuring clothes by Ukrainian designers. From morning to night there were Soviet films to see, classical and popular-music concerts to attend, and Soviet books, records, and souvenirs to buy. And who could say how many questions the guides answered, or how many kilometers they covered as they led Americans around the exhibition, telling them the truth about the Soviet Union?

The exhibition was also the center of an intensive educational program. Hundreds of Americans showed up for a special meeting to commemorate the anniversary of the October Revolution. A meeting with leading figures in the USA-USSR Friendship Society was no less well attended. There was a contest that gave visitors a chance to show how much they knew about the Soviet Union, a photo competition on the theme of how Americans see the USSR, and a children's art competition. All attracted many participants. There were also discussions on such widely varied topics as "Women's Struggle for Equality," "The Development of Soviet Science," "Education in the USSR," "The Work of Intourist," "Health Care in the USSR," "The Peace-Loving Foreign Policy of the Soviet

Union," "The New Constitution of the USSR," and "Protecting the Environment." These activities were an important part of the National Exhibition of the USSR. They gave added meaning to the encounter in Los Angeles.

And now about the anti-Soviet counterexhibition and its organizers.

Rabbi Bernard M. Cohen of Los Angeles was worried. The congregation in attendance at his synagogue had shrunk to an average of between 150 and 250, although he had room for as many as 750. What could he do? Finally he hit on the idea of calling in David Avadon, a local magician, to perform tricks illustrating the miracles described in the scriptures. According to the press, this did increase the size of Rabbi Cohen's congregation, although most of the newcomers were children.

This story is entirely authentic. The *Los Angeles Times* ran a large photograph of the rabbi and the magician conducting a joint service. The accompanying article also gave the synagogue's address.

The resourceful rabbi's idea was borrowed by the people who tried to sabotage the Soviet exhibition in Los Angeles. Like sleight-of-hand artists, they combined religion, chauvinism, and anti-Sovietism into a show of their own, which they mounted at the Convention Center, the site of the Soviet exhibition. They opened on the same day, and the *Los Angeles Times* printed the two announcements side by side.

The organizers of the counterexhibition behaved impudently from the very beginning. Their mood, it seemed, was wildly euphoric. Or perhaps the word is frantic. The Soviet specialists who were getting our exhibition ready for opening day were confronted outside the entrance to the Convention Center with pickets — militant Zionists and Soviet renegades, traitors to their homeland, who had been summoned as reinforcements. On several occasions I myself crossed the picket lines together with the Soviet specialists, who invariably met the taunts and threats hurled at them with dignity, poise, and scorn. This obviously infuriated the picketers. I ought to say there were never more than two or three dozen of them, although the press and television gave them intensive coverage, especially just before our exhibition opened. It seems to me that this time bourgeois propaganda backfired. Television viewers saw not only the blustering pickets, but also the huge letters USSR that marked the entrance to our exhibition. Newspaper readers learned not only what the anti-Soviet demonstrators were shouting, but

also why they were shouting: a Soviet exhibition was about to open. In effect local newspapers and television stations provided a good deal of advance publicity — albeit of a peculiar kind.

And now the decisive moment had come: the simultaneous openings of the two exhibitions. At eight in the morning, two hours before the first visitors would be admitted, a long line had formed outside the doors to the Soviet exhibition. There was nobody standing outside the entrance to the other exhibition. In the days that followed I often saw people lined up — sometimes by the hundreds — to get into our exhibition. There were never any such crowds outside the counterexhibition. It should be said too that many Americans who looked in on the other exhibition did so not out of sympathy with its organizers or hostility towards our country, but simply out of curiosity, a desire to make comparisons, or an interest in seeing where the truth lay.

The American public and press were unanimous in their verdict on the two exhibitions at the Convention Center: it was clear to absolutely everybody that the Soviet exhibition carried the day. The people behind the counterexhibition had disgraced themselves again. Their trick had not come off.

I spent many hours listening to Soviet guides answering visitors' questions and talking to Americans who had come to see the exhibition. I also read through hundreds of the remarks written in the visitors' book.

"I'm really impressed with the advancement of space technology and I also hope that these two great nations, the USSR and the USA, will join together and cooperate to understand better.— Bolivar Gonjas."

"Thank you, please come again, God bless you!" A long list of signatures follows.

"I think it is very nice of you to spend all this time and money to show us your great country.— Julie James, age fourteen."

"Exhibition is very interesting and educational and dynamic!" There are many signatures, including two in Russian: Pavel Konovalov and Zhenya Konovalov.

"Would you Soviets please try to talk our government into giving national health insurance to American citizens — this is a human right Americans should have the government does not provide.— Paul Z."

"Thank you. Russian-Americans can be proud of you.— Frank Goncharov." This was written in Russian.

"I am a student 15 years of age. I am Armenian and I am proud of what has been shown here!" Unsigned.

"Very good! Excellent!— V. Z." Written in Russian.

"Our homeland has come a long way — from ruins to moon-rovers. Many thanks to you, and good wishes in your further travels!— D. Z." Written in Russian.

"Hope you will send more exhibitions like this so we in the US can see and understand the life and peoples of the USSR. Good luck and best wishes!— Elisabet Greenberg."

Some visitors offered not only their impressions but also advice and suggestions.

"Please learn from our mistake, don't kill your environment with smog.— Al Jones."

"Not enough information provided with regards to the construction of many units shown.— Bart McGrath."

"More exploration and details of what this equipment performed, how it functioned.— Sandra Leones."

Here is an entry from the visitors' book at the Armenian pavilion.

"I wish my life was a little more to my likings at the moment. Otherwise, I would really have my heart into this great exhibit, but that is life and not the way I want to live. See you some day when I go to the USSR. How can I mend this broken heart of mine?— Thomas Long."

"I left Russia two years ago. It is my native country and I love it with all my heart.— Valera." This is in Russian, but the signature uses an English "r" instead of the Russian one. Evidently the writer is still very young. Someone brought him to the USA, but not before he had learned to love his own country.

There are also openly anti-Soviet comments, though their number is insignificant compared with the rest. Here is one written in garbled Russian.

"Lies — all lies. You are lying, comrades." The signature is illegible.

The next example is in English.

"We of the KKK hate you Reds.— KKK."

There are also fitting replies to the sporadic outbursts of malice.

"Be assured that vast numbers of Americans do not for one moment share the views of the hysterical Jews, religious fanatics and others who have made fools of themselves here.— An American."

An elderly man approached me in one of the pavilions, where I was examining the visitors' book and copying out comments, and said:

"Excuse me, but why are you copying things out of that book?"

"I am a Soviet journalist. I want to be able to tell my readers how Americans reacted to this exhibition."

"Oh. In that case I should warn you about something. You'll find some comments against your country there — hateful things. Don't let them worry you. Don't pay them any mind. Those aren't real Americans."

And as if to prove the truth of what he said, he introduced himself and handed me his card. The name on it was Carlos Galvez.

In closing I will describe one more scene, which illustrates quite clearly the feelings of the American public.

The exhibition's conference hall was packed. Soviet representatives were answering visitors' questions. Before the beginning of the session I had seen several of those present coming out of the anti-Soviet counterexhibition. It was to be expected that they had been primed by the Zionists with barbed questions. I noted down all the questions asked during that session. Here they are.

"At what age do children in the USSR start school? How are foreign languages taught in Soviet schools? How is the new Constitution of the USSR different from the old one? Does the Soviet Union have a Supreme Court, and if so what are its functions? What is the structure of the USSR Supreme Soviet? How many people belong to trade unions in the USSR? At what age do people in the Soviet Union retire? How much are they paid in retirement benefits? What is the USSR doing about occupational safety? What plans do Soviet cosmonauts have for the future? Is the USSR thinking of building artificial planets? Are there any restrictions on admissions to institutions of higher learning? Do young people from other countries come to the USSR to study? Does the Soviet Union intend to keep its whaling fleet in operation?"

And that completes the list. Not one question about the anti-Soviet counterexhibition and its vicious misrepresentations!

There cannot be the slightest doubt that the National Exhibition of the USSR accomplished its worthy purpose in Los Angeles.

THAT'S HOW IT WAS, THAT'S HOW IT SHOULD BE

It's Not Crowded Up There

"How would you get from the Kremlin to the headquarters of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance?" That was the question I overheard as we came into the classroom. The students were two American astronauts. They were standing over a large model of downtown Moscow, and their teacher was quizzing them, in Russian, about the route they would follow and the names of the streets and squares it would take them through.

The lesson was interrupted by our appearance. I automatically asked my first question in English, but the Americans answered me in Russian. Not very fluently, it may be, and with mistakes, but their meaning was perfectly clear. The conversation continued in Russian, with the teacher smiling and blushing, correcting her students, making them repeat — like schoolboys — the words and phrases they had got wrong. Despite all the lapses, I was reminded once again of a familiar fact: astronauts may not be a breed apart, but they are not exactly like the rest of us, either. In just three months (which of course had not been devoted entirely to studying Russian), these two had made considerable progress in our language, which is generally thought to be a difficult one. They had not been selected from among the hundreds and thousands of other candidates because of their linguistic abilities. At the time no one was thinking of that at all. But it seemed the selection process had told here too. Courage, experience, intelligence, and desire — these are probably the main qualities that count. Forged into a single whole, they make a character of strong stuff, capable of accomplishing anything — or just about.

Like our own space pioneers, beginning with the immortal Gagarin, American astronauts (at least those I have met) have a readily apparent personal appeal. You feel a deep strength in them, an openness of spirit. All of them have a will of iron and wide experience — things acquired before they ever entered the space center.

Coming into the classroom with its model of Moscow, I realized that I had two strokes of luck to be grateful for. First, I had arrived during the Russian lesson. And second, one of the astronauts had been among the original group of seven chosen for the American space program, while the other was a newcomer. The oddest thing of all was that both the veteran and the rookie had yet to make their first space flight.

I had an interesting talk with them. Most of my questions concerned their personal backgrounds.

First the older man, Donald Slayton. He was born in 1924. In 1949 he graduated from the University of Minnesota with a degree in aeronautical engineering. He had his reasons for choosing that field. The United States Air Force had made him a bomber pilot in 1943. He flew fifty-six combat missions in the European theater. Afterwards he transferred to the Pacific, where he flew another seven missions. After graduating from the university he worked two years for Boeing as an engineer. In 1951, he went back to the Air Force. He served as a flight instructor, then as a technical inspector, then as a fighter pilot. He supplemented his training in engineering with 4,900 hours of flying time, of which 2,950 were spent in jet aircraft. These were the qualifications Donald Slayton brought to the USA's first team of astronauts, selected in April of 1959. Six others were chosen at the same time. Their accomplishments since then have been many, and their names are well known: Scott Carpenter, Gordon Cooper, John Glenn, Virgil Grissom, Walter Schirra, and Alan Shepard.

But why hadn't Slayton been on a space flight yet? Back in 1959, he had been designated as the pilot for Mercury 8. But in 1962 it was Carpenter, not Slayton, who circled our planet three times in a little under five hours. Slayton had been taken off the crew list when it was discovered he was suffering from a heart problem. Luck had dealt him a heavy blow. But he simply would not quit. He stayed with the program. In 1963 he was made director of flight crew operations. It was an important and responsible job, one that anybody would have been honored to hold. But not Slayton. He wanted to fly, not to supervise flights. He was already in superb physical condition from his training, and now he began his own program to strengthen his heart and overcome the ailment. After years of unrelenting effort, he achieved what might have seemed impossible. In March of 1972, following exhaustive medical examinations, he was reinstated as a regular member of the space team. (True, he did keep his job as head of mission control.) Now Slayton was preparing to take part in Apollo 18 flight, the joint US-Soviet mission. And so it was that we met at a Russian lesson, over a model of Moscow.

The other astronaut I met that day was Robert Overmeyer. He had not been tapped for the Soviet-American mission, but he was studying Russian just the same. It might come in handy one day!

Talking with the American astronauts, and with the heads of the space center, I saw again and again that they have a deep and sincere respect for their Soviet colleagues. As professionals, they know what counts. They remember that the first human to set foot on the road to the stars was Yuri Gagarin, a Russian, a Soviet.

I also want to say a little about another acquaintance of mine, Thomas Stafford. He was one of the first American astronauts and is now one of the most experienced. He was a member of the backup crew for three Gemini missions. In December of 1965 he and Schirra, aboard Gemini 6, docked in space with Gemini 7. The two ships remained joined for more than five hours. In June of 1969, Stafford commanded the Gemini 9 flight. He and Eugene Cernan docked with a special platform sent up earlier. The mission broke a record at its conclusion: the capsule splashed down only four tenths of a kilometer from the center of the target area. Stafford was a member of the backup crew for Apollo 7, and then, in May of 1969, he commanded Apollo 10. On that mission a lunar module orbited the Moon (approaching to within eight miles of it) and then re-docked with the service module. This was Stafford's contribution to preparations for the landing Apollo 11 made on the Moon in July of 1969. In all, Stafford has spent over three hundred hours in space and performed six dockings there. It was good reason that this crack space pilot was chosen for the joint Apollo-Soyuz venture. His career as an astronaut shows how the creative abilities of a capable individual can be used to the fullest.

Now we are in Stafford's office at the space center. The decor is standard American. An American flag stands in one corner, and a set of antelope horns hangs on a wall. The office, the flag, and the secretary in the outer room indicate a certain rank. Stafford is the deputy head of mission control, under Donald Slayton. Yes, Stafford has a lot of experience to be shared with his colleagues. He has logged six thousand hours of flying time, five thousand in jet aircraft. He is the co-author of two books, the *Handbook for Performance Flight Testing* and the *Pilot's Handbook for Performance Flight Test-Aerodynamics*.

Since we have just come from a Russian lesson, and since Stafford too speaks to us in Russian, I begin the conversation by asking how he is progressing in our language.

"Well," he says, "Russian isn't easy, but it isn't impossible. I study three or four hours a day. I understand what you say.

Do you understand my Russian?"

The conversation then turned quite naturally to the Soviet-American mission. From Stafford's words it was clear that he too had a great respect for his Soviet colleagues and was keenly interested in the joint experiments. He described with enthusiasm his visit to a Soviet space center, Zvyozdny Gorodok. He spoke of his own friendships with Soviet cosmonauts and of the warm reception they were always given here in Houston. In fact another group of Soviet cosmonauts and space experts was to arrive in just three days, and I myself saw what pains were taken with the preparations. It was to be a working visit, not a courtesy call or a tourist outing.

My interview with Stafford took place just a few days after three American astronauts had safely returned to Earth after the first Skylab flight. The mission, it will be remembered, had its moments of suspense.

"Yes, it really had us worried for a while," Stafford said. "I was working fifteen or sixteen hours a day — like everyone else here at the center. We were all under a lot of tension."

I had watched the re-entry on television back in Washington. The cameramen, already skilled at filming such events, had caught the space capsule in their viewfinders even before its parachute opened and held it there for nearly two hours as it splashed down and was lifted onto the deck of an aircraft carrier. Finally the astronauts had emerged into the daylight. I had been deeply impressed.

"I thought the live television coverage of the splash down was amazing," I told Stafford. "But what amazed me even more was the way coverage of such a historic moment was interrupted by commercials. When the astronauts came out of the capsule, for instance, I was on the edge of my seat. Nobody could really be sure that they were all right. And then suddenly I'm hearing about deodorants, or hemorrhoid remedies, or laundry detergents."

"I don't like it any more than you. But what can I do about it? Personally I ignore commercials. I advise you to do the same."

"Do you mean even you astronauts, the pride of the whole nation, can't do anything to keep commercials from spoiling television coverage of space flights? After all, there are only one or two a year."

"That's right. There's nothing we can do."

Stafford presented me with a photograph of himself, inscribed with some warm words. Then we went for a tour of the space center, which bears the name of Lyndon Johnson. He was a Texan, and he worked hard to get the space center located in his home state. It opened in September of 1963. The center designs and tests space ships and every kind of equipment connected with space exploration. Its work also includes selecting and training astronauts, planning and organizing space flights, and conducting experiments of every sort — medical, scientific, and technical. And although the launches and splashdowns take place thousands of miles from Houston, the center houses the main control center. Up in space or on the ground, the astronauts are constantly in touch with their home base. More than four thousand engineers, technicians, administrators, instructors, and clerks work here. Along with forty astronauts. Seven thousand more specialists are employed on temporary contracts.

Not far from the center residential areas have sprung up. There are houses, hotels, schools, and stores. The center itself has about one hundred buildings, from the nine-story design center to the brick guard booth. I call it a guard booth, but its real purpose is traffic control. The space center has long been one of the USA's biggest tourist attractions. The first thing you notice are the crowds of visitors wandering around everywhere.

The flight control center has a large visitors' area, with tiers of seats rising one above another in a broad curve, like a big movie theater. It is separated from the working area by a glass pane that allows an excellent view of everything going on inside. I was taken into the working area itself. There are several rows of desks, all facing the same way. Each of them has a television screen, a computer, various keys and buttons, and several telephones. Hanging on the front wall are illuminated maps of the earth's hemispheres; the flight trajectory of a spaceship twists across the two halves like a snake. Work here goes on round the clock. Nowadays there is an uninterrupted flow of traffic in space: human visitors in their ingenious craft, orbital laboratories, unmanned satellites. There are several dozen people sitting here, but they make up only a small part of the flight control team, which includes thousands of specialists during manned space voyages. The command control center might be called the eyes, ears, and brain of that vast organism.

Right here in this room you find proof of the close links between space exploration and man's life on earth. Here, for example, is a machine that displays the vital signs of astronauts

on the Moon. The same sort of apparatus is now widely used in medical centers. Columbus did not originally set out to discover America. In fact, he did not even suspect its existence. Nonetheless, his voyage changed the world considerably. It is the same with space exploration. The benefits still to be derived are incalculable, as visitors to the space center must realize.

Electricity, atomic energy, automobiles, airplanes, and rockets were regarded as mere playthings during the early stages of work on their development. The electric motor, a revolutionary technological breakthrough, was not put to significant practical use until a hundred years after its invention. There have been no such delays in finding applications for the many scientific and technological advances that have come out of space research. Take for example communications satellites, which have already proved their commercial worth. Or weather satellites, which have given Americans advance warning of the approach of several dangerous storms. To cite one case, information gathered by satellites made it possible to evacuate 350,000 people from the path of hurricane Clara. It has been estimated that accurate five-day forecasts made with the help of weather satellites prevent seven billion dollars in losses each year in the USA; this takes into account agriculture, forest and water management, and transportation. Oceanography, geology, and many other highly practical disciplines have already become inseparable from work in space. And as the economic benefits from activities in space increase, the cost of space research diminishes. In 1958, the USA spent $100,000 for every pound it put into orbit; the cost has now dropped to $1,000 a pound.

A few more intriguing figures. In the decade leading up to the first moon landing, America spent something like twenty billion dollars on space research. A healthy sum! But over those same ten years Americans spent double that amount on tobacco, and four times as much on drink.

Literally the entire country is involved in the varied work of the space center. In the past ten years it has awarded twenty thousand contracts to research institutions and industry. My hosts stressed that coordinating all those contracts and the deliveries made on them is a complex and responsible job — virtually a science in itself.

It was interesting to watch from the space center as the new crew of Skylab made step after step in mastering the laboratory. At one exhibit, a full scale model of the gigantic complex (Skylab has a volume of 390 cubic meters) was taken

apart into its main components. Each of them is a wonder of engineering in itself.

The astronauts in the Mercury space capsules could barely turn their heads or move their arms. Things were a little less cramped aboard the Gemini ships. Members of the Apollo crews could take two or three steps back and forth; they ate hot meals and slept in reasonable comfort. The Skylab astronauts can run inside their ship and take hot showers there.

Man has probed the mysteries of the moon at first hand. Reconnaissance ships (so far without crews) have been sent to Mars and Jupiter. Re-usable spacecraft — space planes, if you will — have been built for flights on a regular basis. What wonders the minds and hands of humanity are capable of today! And the more closely people work together, the more they will achieve. It seems to me highly symbolic that the scientists and astronauts of the USA and the USSR should set an example of cooperation in space research, on the leading edge of twentieth-century science and technology.

Détente and Health

I arrived at the National Institutes of Health (in Bethesda, Maryland, not far from Washington) at the appointed hour in the morning. Seven American doctors sat at a long table in the big conference hall. There was a projector, and a screen on one wall. One by one my hosts explained to me, in layman's terms, the essence of the problems they were working on, and described their collaboration with Soviet colleagues. Dr. Donald Fredrickson, Director of the National Institutes of Health, presented an overview of Soviet-American research on heart and circulatory diseases. Then Dr. Robert Levy, Director of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, talked about the treatment of arteriosclerosis. Next to speak was Dr. Peter Frommer, head of cardiology — and so on to the seventh and final report, by Dr. Clarence Dennis, which described work in progress on the construction of an artificial heart.

The presentations at the National Cancer Institute and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences were no less detailed. The reception I was given at the USA's largest medical research center is in itself evidence of the Americans' lively interest in furthering contacts with Soviet medicine. The strongest, and most powerful impression that I brought away from my visit was that a genuine desire exists

to collaborate with our Soviet medical experts. That desire is made up of several ingredients. First, there is the good will of the doctors, whose vocation it is to serve mankind and to lessen the sufferings caused by sickness. Second, their professional zeal as scientists. And finally, there are purely pragmatic, even commercial, considerations. Why re-invent the bycicle when somebody else has come up with the idea long ago? It is more efficient simply to copy the plans. The same thing holds in science, and that includes medicine. My hosts at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) stressed that the volume of scientific information is now very great, and that exchanges can do much to speed progress. The result will be greater benefits to all at less cost. In other words, two heads are better than one.

Everyone I met at the NIH professed a high regard for Soviet medicine. This feeling no doubt goes a long way towards explaining the eagerness to work together with Soviet colleagues. I found to my amusement that even as I learned about the USA's highest medical achievements I was filled with pride in Soviet medical science. I had warned my hosts that I have no background in medicine whatever, and nonetheless they were taking the trouble to tell me in detail about their work. I could not help feeling that in a way I was acting as the ambassador of our country's medical experts, who incidentally have made numerous visits to the NIH themselves. It was thanks to their achievements that I was received so cordially.

The very first report I heard that morning had to do with heart and circulatory diseases. And with good reason. They are now the number one enemy of mankind, accounting for forty-five percent of all deaths. (Cancer is the second biggest killer.) The NIH has a special division for research in this field, the National Heart and Lung Institute, which has sent specialists to work at the USSR's Bakulev Institute of Cardiovascular Surgery and Vishnevsky Institute of Surgery. A joint symposium has been held at the NIH on congenital heart defects; twenty-seven papers and reports by Soviet and American doctors were presented and discussed.

My hosts at the NIH told me about the fruitful work they were doing with Soviet colleagues on the problems of arteriosclerosis, the effects of heart and circulatory diseases on metabolism, coronary thromboses, and the surgical correction of congenital heart defects, particularly in children. The results of an extensive study of arteriosclerosis patients in the USSR and the USA have proved useful in combating that disease,

which is becoming more widespread every year. Soviet and American cardiologists have also agreed to collaborate in the study of heart attacks, the cause of so many sudden deaths. Many of the victims do not even suspect that they are in danger, that their hearts may give out in a mere matter of days or weeks. Medicine must learn to recognize the warning signals early and prevent untimely deaths. Researchers in the two countries are working together on problems connected with heart surgery: auxiliary circulation, transfusions, and the replacement of blood. Finally, collaborative efforts are underway to build artificial replacements for organs of the human circulatory system.

The awesome daring of the research being done came home to me during my visit to the National Heart and Lung Institute. There was a breathtaking slide presentation on what had been accomplished to date and what was being planned for the future. I was especially amazed by what I learned about artificial replacements for organs of the heart and circulatory system. The goal that has been set is truly stupendous. If a human heart can be successfully replaced with a prosthesis, this will mark the beginning of a new era in medicine. Many specialists in the USA and the USSR are now at work on the problem. They come from many disciplines: physics, biology, chemistry, design engineering, medicine, etc. The head of the Soviet side of this joint venture is Professor V. Shumakov, Director of the Institute of the Transplantation of Organs and Tissues at the USSR Ministry of Health, who has done pioneering work towards the creation of an artificial heart. His American counterpart is Professor Michael De Bakey, a distinguished surgeon from the Texas Medical Center in Houston.

This scientific undertaking, like other Soviet-American ventures, is planned for the long term. After all, a project like building an artificial heart demands enormous efforts and many years of work. In the next few years researchers hope to develop an artificial heart for use in clinical practice, a device that can replace the human heart temporarily. But even today the creation of a permanently implanted artificial heart is not a fantastic dream. In 1977 Shumakov and De Bakey met in Moscow to sign an agreement laying out a program for further work by the team of Soviet and American scientists they head.

The work being done under that program was described to me by Dr. Ruth Hegeli, one of the heads of the National Heart and Lung Institute. She is a charming middle-aged woman, articulate and enthusiastic, with a knack for pres-

enting the essence of a complex problem in a readily understandable way. I asked her about her personal history.

"I made up my mind to become a doctor when I was seven," Mrs. Hegeli told me. "And after that I never lost sight of my dream. It wasn't easy for me, though. Even today it is much harder for a woman to become a highly qualified specialist in the USA than it is for a man. Back then things were worse. I remember that barely one candidate in ten for admission to my medical school was a woman. At the interview, after I had answered all the standard questions, I was suddenly confronted with questions like: "What do you think of boys?' "Do you have any boyfriends?' "Do you date?' "Do you plan to get married?' It would never have occurred to the admissions committee to ask the male candidates such questions. But they asked me. Still, I got in. I had to work all through school to pay my tuition. It was tough, but I made it."

Dr. Hegeli told me about the joint efforts being made by Soviet and American doctors, in which she herself is an active participant. She has visited the USSR several times.

"It was with good reason that a special agreement was concluded concerning work on the artificial heart," she said. "This is one of the most complex problems facing modern science. In solving it, specialists from many fields will have to work together — doctors, chemists, physicists, technicians, and others. What we need is a reliable, compact machine that can maintain normal circulation for the long term. It has to be made out of materials that will not provoke clotting of the blood. The power source is another problem. The machine will also need an automatic regulating device to vary the intensity of its work with physical and emotional stress. These are only the main outlines. There are many complex problems to be solved."

Then Dr. Hegeli told me about the history of work in this field. Considerable experience has been amassed both in the USA and in the USSR. The first apparatus that functioned as an artificial heart was built back in the 20s by the Soviet researcher Sergei Bryukhonenko. Doctors now have devices that can take over the heart's function for several hours (the heart-lung machine). There is a real need, however, for a permanent, artifical replacement organ.

I confess that I was quite agitated as I entered the operating room. Dr. Andrew Morrow was performing open-heart surgery. The patient was a ten-year-old boy with congenital heart disease. The surgeon's task was to find the cause of the

disfunction and do what he could to correct it. When I came in, the boy's chest cavity had already been opened. The first thing I noticed was the size of the heart — three times the normal. This was a result of the ailment. I was also surprised by the virtual absence of blood. The oversized heart was beating, and the surgeon was inspecting it manually. Most unceremoniously, it seemed to me. Searching for the defect, he inserted the whole length of one finger into the heart muscle. Then he took the heart boldly into his palm and turned it from side to side to get a better look. And it continued to beat, lying in his hand. A living human heart! What made all this possible was the complex apparatus standing around the operating table. All through the hours-long operation it would sustain the delicate life process of the child and keep his heart beating. Dr. Morrow's assistants — ten or so of them — moved about soundlessly and efficiently. I had felt shy before coming into the operating room, but now I was unable to take my eyes off the hands of the surgeon, which seemed to be the hands of a magician, and the beating heart of the child. That heart wanted to live, no matter what! It was in the name of miraculous operations like this one, in the name of human life and health, that the doctors of the USA and the USSR decided to join their noble efforts.

A special agreement on Soviet-American cooperation in medicine was signed during President Nixon's visit to Moscow in May of 1972. Soviet and American doctors decided that their collaborative efforts should begin with three of the most important fields in modern medicine: heart and circulatory diseases, cancer, and the effects of environment on health. My hosts stressed that concrete plans had been made, some of which were already being realized. It had been decided, for example, that American and Soviet research institutions should work together without intermediaries; and already direct, businesslike contacts between Soviet and American researchers were an accustomed part of their work.

The topics to be studied within each of the three main fields were clearly outlined and an organizational structure was set up. Delegations and individual specialists have been exchanged under this program. Joint conferences are held both in the USA and the USSR. Researchers exchange publications and scientific information of all sorts, as well as experimental data and medical apparatus. They also conduct research and experiments together and exchange medicines, reagents, and biologicals. All the topics to be researched under

the program have been discussed, and many of the American and Soviet doctors have worked together already. Arrangements have also been made for the exchange of what might be called the physical evidence of various breakthroughs.

At the National Cancer Institute I was shown virus strains developed in the USSR. These, the American doctors told me, were valuable presents from their Soviet colleagues, contributions to the fight against the common enemy, cancer. They would be used in a joint study aimed at proving that certain malignancies can be caused by viruses. An exchange of medicines for combating tumors was also underway.

Interesting results have been obtained from a series of parallel experiments in the USA and the USSR with viruses extracted from different types of tumors in humans and animals. Here, as in other areas of work under the joint program, one of the most important achievements has been the elaboration of a unified technology, which is an essential step towards the further development of cooperation.

John Molowy of the National Cancer Institute told me how Soviet and American scientists are working together to overcome that dread disease.

"Our cooperative projects are going very well. We do more and more together every year, and the contacts between our scientists are very broad and deep. Experimental and clinical studies of different anti-cancer drugs have been conducted at dozens of institutions in the USSR and the USA. We place high hopes in these exchanges. At present the main areas in which we are working together are chemotherapy and immunotherapy for tumors, the study of viruses found together with leukemia and tumors in animals and man, and the genetics of cancer cells. I myself am a specialist in the virology of cancer. We and our Soviet colleagues in this field are exchanging samples of viruses that may cause various forms of cancer. The results have been highly beneficial to research. Not long ago we received two baboons from a laboratory in Sukhumi. They had been injected with a virus Soviet scientists isolated from a human leukemia patient. Several dozen of us here continued the work of our Soviet colleagues, who had followed the course of the disease in the apes. Careful study of the virus strains showed that they might indeed be leukemia-causing agents. Intensive work on this is now underway. I should also say that cooperation makes it possible to get experimental results more quickly. It's better to work together."

Joseph Saunders, who is responsible for coordinating the Cancer Institute's part in the joint research, spoke enthusiastically and knowledgeably about the value of such contacts between scientists. He particularly emphasized the benefits researchers in both countries stand to gain from them. Here are a few examples.

There are fewer deaths from cancer in the USSR than in any of the developed capitalist countries. The reason is that under our system of free medical care physical examinations are conducted on a mass basis, and so the illness is often discovered in its early stages. This shows what can be achieved through prophylaxis, and American cancer specialists are much interested in studying our work in this area. Soviet specialists, in turn, point out that we can learn a good deal from the United States, especially about equipment for modern medical centers and the use of computers. The most important thing, though, is the exchange of scientific information and working side by side with colleagues. Over and over again I have heard American scientists (and not medical men alone) praise the high professionalism of their Soviet counterparts and the breadth and originality of their thinking.

I had a curious conversation with Dr. Carl Kupfer, the head of the National Eye Institute. Nearly half of humanity (at least those of us who wear glasses) is interested in the development of the branch of medicine he represents. Both American and Soviet doctors have considerable achievements to their credit. Our surgeons, for example, were the first in the world to use lasers in treating glaucoma; the Americans took the lead in using lasers to operate on the retina. Dr. Kupfer complained, with what seemed to me justifiable irritation, that Soviet and American specialists in his field are not yet working together as their colleagues in cancer research, for instance, are. "Why don't we have the same kind of joint agreements they do?" he asked indignantly. "Please write about that in your magazine."

Yes, it seems that good example can be contagious too. Many American specialists who have not yet become involved in work with their Soviet colleagues are, like Dr. Kupfer, eagerly awaiting their chance.

I learned much of interest at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, which studies the relationship between man's health and the world around him. The purpose of the institute is threefold. First, to isolate chemical, physical, and biological factors in the environment that have a negative

effect on the human organism. With every passing year the rapid growth of industry (including the chemical industry) and the use of chemicals in agriculture do more and more damage to the environment and to human health. The air, the water, and the soil are being poisoned. Second, to study diseases caused by contaminants in the environment, and the way these contaminants affect the course of diseases already known. Finally, to fight against pollution of the environment and for the preservation of nature in its pure, pristine state as an aid in promoting healthy human life.

It is still not too late to save nature — and that means ourselves too — from destruction. But only cooperative international efforts can accomplish this task. This means that the agreement the USA and the USSR have reached on environmental protection is of great significance not only for the peoples of our two countries but also for mankind as a whole. Under that agreement, Soviet and American scientists have established more than ten working groups to study problems arising out of the pollution of the air, rivers, lakes, seas and oceans, the need to protect endangered species, legal aspects of nature preservation, and so on. A Soviet-American commission was established to oversee the work. It includes, on the Soviet side, representatives of fifteen ministries and agencies, and also of the USSR Academy of Sciences and the USSR Academy of Medical Sciences. It has guided research projects in both the USA and the USSR. For example, automatic systems for monitoring water quality have been tested in the USA on the Delaware and Ohio rivers, on the Great Lakes, and on Lake Tahoe, and in the USSR on the Donets and Moscow rivers. American scientists have learned from the work being done by their Soviet colleagues on Lake Baikal. Simultaneous studies of air pollution have been conducted in Leningrad and St. Louis. Another example: the hunting of certain rare animals has long been forbidden in the USSR, and scientists in the USA, where such prohibitions have been introduced only recently, are eager to hear about our experience. Soviet specialists, in turn, are hoping to profit from the Americans' experience in reducing harmful emissions from automobile engines.

Philip Handler, president of the USA's National Academy of Sciences, has declared that if our planet is to be saved all the people on it must join in a cooperative effort. Even monitoring the quality of the air, he points out, requires work in more than one country, by more than one government or

group of governments. What is needed is a global system, with stations in every country. Protecting the environment has become an urgent task for all humanity, Handler says. That is why the agreements that have been signed are so important. By the way, Handler has also stated the urgency of his own concern in the post insistent terms. He says that efforts to save our planet must be undertaken now, and on a grand scale. Certain other scientific goals, which till now have seemed to us of the utmost importance, will have to be forsaken. Other fields of human endeavor will have to give their human and material resources to the effort. The environment, Handler says, is now the concern of every individual and of humanity as a whole. Here then is the purpose, the substance, and the enormous significance of cooperation between the USA and the USSR for environmental protection.

Handler's words of warning are disturbing. They come from a man who knows what he is talking about. Russell Train, Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality, has said that the agreements signed during President Nixon's visit to Moscow provide a good basis for cooperation between the two countries in the field of environmental protection. Train has visited Moscow, Leningrad, and Siberia, and seen the work being done at many Soviet research institutions. He speaks from his own experience when he says that Soviet science has produced outstanding environmental specialists, dedicated to the task of conservation and sincerely interested in collaboration between the USSR and the USA. The two countries, he says, face many of the same environmental problems, although there is no question that air and water pollution are more serious in the USA.

America thus stands to gain at least as much as the Soviet Union from collaboration between the two countries' scientists in this field. Both in Bethesda, at the National Institute of Health, and in other American cities, I heard repeatedly about the complexity and urgency of efforts to protect the environment.

The Energy of Peace

The Geological Survey has its headquarters in the little town of Menlo Park, California. Its job is to predict earthquakes and to reduce their disastrous consequences. In the main building hangs a large map of the state. Each of the dots that

cover it stands for an observation point manned day and night by specialists. Earthquakes are a real and constant danger in sunny, eternally green California, and so the Geological Survey is handsomely funded.

Here, in this highly specialized research center, I was welcomed in quite passable Russian by a young scientist Robert Wesson. He is thirty-one years old, and his years of work as a geologist are still numbered in single figures. This makes it all the more surprising that he has already worked six months in our country.

Half a year of work in the field. That goes beyond a tourist trip or attending a symposium. What is more, the work Robert Wesson did took him far from the big cities, to the mountains of Tajikistan near Garm. He was not alone, but with a group of his American colleagues. Some of them, including Robert, took their families along. Robert continues to be amazed at how quickly his three-year-old son made himself at home in the new place and the abilities the boy showed as a linguist. He and the other members of the group have fond memories of their life in those remote mountains, of the local people, and of their Soviet counterparts. Success in working together became the start of many lasting friendships. Now Robert is preparing to go back for another six months as part of a second such group. Tajikistan is a lot like California, and there is plenty for specialists like him to do. Meanwhile a group of Soviet scientists has returned the first visit. They spent several months working in California.

Such comings and goings are not unusual any more, but that does not lessen their significance. The Soviet Union and the United States have formed working relationships in various fields of science. Here is what Robert Wallace, head of the earthquake study group, told me.

"Cooperation between the USA and the USSR in this field began in May of 1972, with the signing of the bilateral agreement on environmental protection. Both sides set up working groups. The Soviet group was headed by Professor Mikhail Sadovsky of the USSR Academy of Sciences. I was asked to head the American group. Plans were then worked out for joint research in four areas: the prediction of earthquakes, laboratory and theoretical study of their causes, the use of mathematical and computer models, and engineering research in seismology. Each of these four projects was placed in the charge of two specialists — one Soviet and one American. The studies are now in full swing. Science

can do something about earthquakes, and we are doing our best. Right now we have several very promising joint projects underway, in addition to the field work in the Garm region and here in California. For example, there are plans for American scientists to work at the Nurek hydroelectric station in Tajikistan. The dam there is three hundred meters high, and as that enormous reservoir fills up there will be plenty of work for people in our field. The water exerts pressure on the rock strata, and everything has to be taken into account to keep them from shifting."

Robert Wallace made me a present of a book about the study of the earth's crust, including both land masses and the ocean beds. Its authors are American and Soviet scientists. They offer some original ideas that could bring scientific advances and great economic benefits. The earth's crust is a single whole, and it can only be properly studied by scientists in different countries working together.

Earthquakes, it might seem, are natural disasters that man is powerless to do anything about. When you hear about the joint efforts being made by scientists in the USSR and the USA, though, you realize that this is not true. Earthquakes can be predicted, and that means that measures can be taken to reduce the damage they cause. After studying the earth's crust, scientists can give exact indications of what may be built in regions affected by earthquakes and what methods of construction may be used. In one case described to me a firm had begun work on an atomic reactor in California without informing the Geological Survey. The project had to be abandoned, after several years and millions of dollars had been spent on design and construction, when it was discovered that the danger of earthquakes made the site unsafe.

The USSR Academy of Sciences and the USA's National Academy of Sciences have regularly exchanged specialists working in such important fields as electronics, solid-state and high-energy physics, semiconductor technology, radio astronomy, laser technology, and polymer chemistry. Each of these fields has its great undertakings, interesting people, and fruitful collaborative efforts that ultimately result in mutual benefit.

Let us take for example high-energy physics, which is on the leading edge of modern science. The main instrument of research in this field is the accelerator. It is one of the largest pieces of apparatus used in science. The most powerful accelerator in the world today is in the USA, on the outskirts

of the little town of Batavia, not far from Chicago. The accelerator, which is completely buried in the earth, is a circular track about two kilometers in diameter (its perimeter is thus approximately six kilometers). Here scientists probe the mysteries of elementary particles, the ultimate building blocks of matter. The accelerator is their principal tool.

As might be expected, each accelerator becomes the center of a little community of scientists. I spent three days in Batavia — on the accelerator, as they say. I found a group of Soviet physicists there. They had come to work, not to sightsee. And they had not come empty-handed, either. Under the joint research project, the Americans were to provide the accelerator, and the Soviets were to bring other apparatus needed for the conduct of various experiments on it. In other words, the benefits were mutual. This was not the first time such cooperation had been undertaken, by the way. Scientists from the University of California, together with their families, had already paid a visit to Serpukhov, where they worked with a Soviet accelerator.

The Batavia accelerator tunnels through the rich farming land of Illinois, and the first thing you notice as you drive into the center are the typical farm buildings. The land for the center was bought from several farmers, and many of their sturdy outbuildings were left standing and converted to new uses. One of them, for example, now houses the dressing rooms of the center's swimming pool, and also a bar. The gigantic accelerator is hidden under the earth, and all in all the center, with its extensive grounds, resembles a nature park. The impression is strengthened by the placidly grazing buffaloes that the new owners have introduced. The multistoried main building towers above all the other structures of the center, many of which are in fact simple wooden cottages. The Soviet scientists also live in such cottages. They have returned from a trip home for vacation to continue their work here.

The car stops at one of the cottages. I am met at the door by Professor Anatoli Kuznetsov, the head of the Soviet group. We introduce ourselves, and he courteously invites me to stay at his "American house" during my visit. I accept. Then we are off again in the car for a first look around the center. The car is necessary: we have long distances to cover. With us is Richard Carrigan, another scientist working at the center. We spend a long time wandering around the imposing main building. Afterwards we visit several laboratories, and then

descend beneath the earth to the main object of interest, the accelerator.

Here we go through a brief but curious preparatory procedure. First the accelerator is stopped. A number of electronic indicators show that it has ceased working, but nonetheless our guide is solemnly handed a key that can only be used if the tunnel is not in operation. We are given portable meters that measure the radioactivity of the air. At last we pass through a series of doors and descend into the tunnel, which reminds me of the Moscow metro. Here though, instead of rails, there is an ion-conductor, in which elementary particles are pushed to unimaginable speeds. (Huge quantities of electrical energy are expended in doing this.) Scientists study both the particles themselves and the sub-particles they break down into.

Anatoli Kuznetsov explained to me that scientists working on the accelerator are like detectives who solve a complicated case by putting together many tiny clues. The elementary particles are of course far too small to be seen. Everything known about them has been inferred from the traces they leave. This is why scientists are constantly inventing delicate and ingenious devices to pick up traces from the particles racing through the accelerator, which are then used to study the properties of the particles and their derivatives. Without such devices the accelerator is like a rifle without a sight. It was such a piece of equipment the Soviet physicists had brought along to the USA — an impulse amplitude analyzer, the scientists call it. The Americans had found it most interesting.

I had long talks with Anatoli and the other Soviet physicists. All of them are still at the beginning of their careers. Anatoli, who is just over forty, is the oldest of them. They are all from the Dubna nuclear research center, fiercely proud of their newly founded town and their daring quest. With their deep and passionate interest in literature (especially poetry), the theater, painting, and music, they are living proof that every physicist must have some streak of the romantic.

Both at work on the accelerator and in their friendly meetings away from work the Soviet and American physicists treated each other with respect, as equals. As I looked at them I found myself thinking various thoughts, not all of them happy. Physics, as we now know, is a science that can cut two ways. In the near future it could provide mankind with an abundance of nuclear energy for peaceful uses that might give its name to a new age in the history of man: the Age of Abundance.

At the same time, the achievements of modern physics have already made it necessary for any potential nuclear aggressor to reckon with the consequences of retaliation. Today no sane person can hope to achieve political goals through nuclear aggression, which would inevitably bring our civilization and all of mankind to the brink of doom.

Ten million people were killed in World War I, and twenty million wounded. In World War II, 54.8 million died, and more than ninety million were wounded. The Swiss scholar Jean-Jacques Babel has estimated that all the wars in human history have claimed a total of 3,640,000,000 lives — that is nearly equal to the number of people now living on earth. A nuclear war would cause hundreds of millions of deaths immediately, and could set off irreversible and fatal processes in the atmosphere, water, and soil.

Preventing nuclear war is a task of the highest priority for all mankind. You cannot help thinking about this when you visit at the Batavia center. In a brochure titled *Accelerators*, written by William Kernan and published by the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, I read that Nazi Germany was held back in developing an atomic bomb because of delays in building an accelerator. The USA already had one. And so the accelerator, like physics itself, can cut two ways. When the work on it is conducted together by Soviet and American specialists in high-energy physics, it may be hoped that they will also be able to create the energy of peace. Their work may be regarded as a reliable guarantee of security for mankind.

Trade — Not Warfare

I was interested in meeting Donald Kendall both because he is the president of PepsiCo, one of the USA's biggest corporations, and because he has enthusiastically endorsed the development of economic ties between the United States and the Soviet Union. It was Kendall who was chosen to be the first chairman of the board of the directors of the US-USSR Chamber of Commerce.

To meet Kendall I had to fly to New York and then travel for an hour or so by car to the picturesque green suburb where PepsiCo has its headquarters. Trees, shrubbery, flowers, artificial lakes — nowadays all this is part of the customary surroundings of major business centers. In the last few years the headquarters of more and more prospering firms have

moved from the cities to the lap of nature. The reasons are not only, or even mainly, esthetic, but rather practical. In the first place, it is healthier to live in the suburbs, both for the heads of corporations themselves and for their subordinates, the people who represent what might be called the corporations' living capital. Capital has to be protected, after all. Second, it is less expensive to maintain a large headquarters, with hundreds or even thousands of employees, in the suburbs. Third, such locations are easier to reach by car from the suburban homes well-to-do Americans prefer than offices in the traffic-choked cities. Business, in a word, has excellent reasons of its own for its return to nature.

The broad holdings of PepsiCo are distinguished from similar business oases by the sculptures that dot the landscape. These are not the old-fashioned classical replicas we are used to seeing in gardens and parks, but works by modern sculptors, members of the so-called avant-garde, executed in stone and metal. Most of the pieces are of such monumental size that they are no doubt better kept out of doors. Those that do manage to produce an effect would certainly lose much by being squeezed under a ceiling and hemmed in by walls. It might seem strange, this conjunction of office buildings and dozens of sculptures. Once again the reason is not only, or even mainly, esthetic. Business has known for a long time that works of art make good long-term investments.

Leaving this open-air museum, I enter another, located inside the PepsiCo headquarters. Before showing me into Kendall's office, the employee who meets me tells about the company's history and points out a portrait of the inventor of Pepsi-Cola, his first patent, some of the first Pepsi bottles, portraits of previous company presidents, and so forth.

Today PepsiCo is a prospering corporation, doing business all across America and in one hundred and twenty foreign countries. Its main competitor in the soft-drink market is Coca-Cola.

"It seems to me there is hardly any difference in the taste of Coke and Pepsi," I tell my guide.

"How can you say that?" he gaps. "There's all the difference in the world! Our product isn't sticky sweet like Coca-Cola. It's brisker, more refreshing. Here, see for yourself."

Bottles of Pepsi appear as if by magic. I take a swallow.

The steps by which PepsiCo rose to world popularity and financial might are mapped out one by one in the museum. We make our way from display case to display case, lulled by

the even flow of proud commentary from our guide, like the fizzing of bubbles in Pepsi-Cola.

Pepsi was invented by a North Carolina druggist sometime in the 1890s. He patented the recipe in 1902, by which time he had realized that the future lay in bottled drinks for mass consumption. He borrowed the money to open his first bottling plant. Several more followed. Business went well.

The driving force behind Pepsi-Cola was a frenetic advertising campaign. Walter Mack, who became head of the firm in 1938, made the whole country ring with its fifteen-second jingle, an old Scottish tune set to a swing rhythm. In just one year this all-American ditty increased the company's profits by $5.6 million (thirty-eight percent). Its composers got $2,500. In 1940 Pepsi launched an international sales effort.

Donald Kendall, who served as an Air Force pilot during the war, became head of the company in 1963. Taking his cue from big business, he moved to diversify. For a start Pepsi merged with a snack-foods firm and changed its name to PepsiCo. After that the conglomerate continued to expand, reaching into totally unrelated fields — sporting goods, for instance.

The tour of the museum completed, I was shown around the PepsiCo headquarters, a sweeping four-story building of modern design. It looks more like some sort of cultural center than an office. Quiet reigns. You might almost think the building was empty. There is modern sculpture in the halls and entryways too. A cafeteria seating several hundred. (Self-service is the rule in the USA.) Pepsi-Cola is dispensed free of charge, by pressing one of the dozens of buttons on the wall. Other drinks must be paid for. There is a vast kitchen gleaming with steel and chrome. An ultra-modern gymnasium with all the equipment you might expect the astronauts to work out on. Here the headquarters employees struggle to keep in working trim. Our guide says that anyone who shows even the slightest hint of a potbelly gets chased into the gym by Mr. Kendall himself. One such clerk, unembarrassed by our presence, pedals away at a stationary bicycle, while another runs on a one-meter track that gallops along under him.

Finally, after inspecting the headquarters of PepsiCo, we are ushered into Mr. Kendall's office. He meets us in the reception room and leads us into the inner sanctum. Kendall is tall and gray-haired, erect and youthful despite his sixty or so years. He is affable, answers questions readily, enjoys a joke, and smiles almost constantly. Still, it is clear from his

concise replies which always go straight to the point, and from his overall businesslike manner that he has no time to waste, that in fact he values his time above all else. Of late he has had to put up with even more pestering than usual from journalists. Donald Kendall has a sense of his own importance. He is not only an important businessman (head of a firm whose sales run to $1.5 billion annually) but also a public figure of some stature in the USA. He has met several times with Soviet leaders during his business trips to the USSR.

This service record has left its impression on Kendall. He never forgets for a moment that time is inexorably fleeting. For him every grain in the hourglass is as valuable as gold. I sensed this at once, and thought with regret that our conversation would be brief. So instead of starting off with the question he was expecting, I improvised a modern version of an old joke.

"A Russian priest was asked what he liked best: vodka, brandy, or wine. "Pepsi-Cola too,' he said." (It was beer in the original.)

Kendall was delighted. I had said the magic word. Pepsi-Cola is god and king here, and a good word about it is a key to the hearts of its makers. The conversation then turned naturally to Pepsi's debut in our country.

"By the way," Kendall said, "Pepsi will be the first American consumer product ever sold in the Soviet Union."

"Will the plant in Novorossiysk be your company's only one in the USSR, or do you intend to build several?"

"I think that the Novorossiysk experiment will serve as a good beginning. We would like to build several plants in different parts of your country, including one outside Moscow. We hope the people of your country will like Pepsi-Cola, and that the USSR will become a large market for us."

"Pepsi-Cola will undoubtedly be popular with consumers in the USSR. By the way, do you intend to advertise there in the same way you do in the USA and other countries?"

"Certainly. Representatives of our advertising division are already in Moscow, working with your specialists."

"It seems to me you shouldn't have to spend so much on advertising in the Soviet Union, since people there are not so used to seeing it. As soon as Pepsi goes on sale the customers will turn up of their own accord."

"Thank you — it's kind of you to say so. But our principle is that advertising goes before the product, always and everywhere. Whenever we enter a new market, the first thing we do

is spend money on advertising. That's the law around here!"

"What do you get from us in return?"

"Oddly enough, in return for our soft drink we receive your hard drinks: brandy of different kinds, vodka, and champagne. I am well acquainted with these products and have a high opinion of them. And millions of Americans agree with me. Our company has already set up a large new department for retail distribution of these beverages in the USA."

"What do you think about business contacts between the USA and the USSR?"

"I have made several trips to the USSR and met with Soviet officials and experts in foreign trade. I have always said that you are reliable and interesting partners, and I continue to say that. I have always stood for the broadening of economic ties between our countries, and I continue to stand for it. There is enormous, untapped potential in Soviet-American trade. The development of such ties is not only good business, but also good politics, since it will help to improve relations between our countries."

At the end of this conversation, which lasted about an hour, I asked my hosts for some printed information on PepsiCo. I was immediately presented with a neatly bound copy of the company's annual report, intended mainly for stockholders. On the first color opening was a photograph of Donald Kendall against the festive background of Red Square.

Years passed. My first meeting with Kendall was followed by others, in the USA and in the Soviet Union.

Yes, the two countries have done a good deal of work together. But the results, as Kendall has said to me repeatedly, could be even more impressive. The problem is that the enemies of Soviet-American cooperation have concentrated their efforts on undermining economic contacts between the two countries. There can be only one basis for the satisfactory development of such contacts: full equality, and a complete absence of discrimination and interference in each other's internal affairs.

The Soviet government, it will be remembered, declined to put the 1972 agreement on Soviet-American trade into action. There were good reasons for this. Within the broad range of questions that came under the agreement, it was specified that the American side would remove discriminatory restrictions on trade with the USSR and accord our country what is known as most-favored-nation status. It seems to me that the term somewhat misrepresents the situation. What was at

issue was not granting special privileges, but removing discriminatory trade barriers, giving the USSR the same rights other countries enjoy in trade with the USA.

Since the time of the cold war the United States has had two tariff schedules. Prohibitively high duties are placed on goods imported from the Soviet Union and eleven other socialist countries. All of the other 130-odd countries of the world, even South Africa, are automatically accorded privileges that give them the status of most favored nations, which means the duties to be paid on their goods are much lower.

It was necessary that this obvious injustice be removed. Here the trouble began. The enemies of détente and Soviet-American collaboration opened direct fire on the trade agreement. They linked the removal of discriminatory barriers with demands regarding our country's emigration policies, which are of course strictly the internal affair of the Soviet state. Such demands represented interference in the internal affairs of the USSR. Acting in defiance of good sense, highly influential forces mounted a vociferous campaign in the US Congress that ended with that body's rejecting the government's proposal that discriminatory barriers against trade with our country be removed. Congress also placed a series of arbitrary restrictions on the USA's Export-Import Bank, limiting the credits it could extend to $300 million over four years, a sum clearly insufficient to support serious trading between the USA and the USSR.

Commenting on this aspect of Soviet-American relations, Donald Kendall cited these figures on credits extended to the Soviet Union by other countries: at the time, France was extending $2.8 billion in credits, the Federal Republic of Germany $1.5 billion, and Japan $1 billion. The USA, as I have said, limited itself to $300 million. This obviously meant other countries, not the USA, would become the USSR's main trading partners in the capitalist world. Kendall also pointed out that by extending only $2 billion in credit to the Soviet Union the United States could have created 400,000 jobs for one year.

Kendall has said that the Soviet Union, in refusing to submit to the humiliating conditions set up by the Congressional legislation on trade, made not only a right choice but the only possible choice. This well-founded opinion is shared by many Americans, from businessmen and politicians to ordinary citizens. It was my personal impression that the majority of Americans disagree with the decision of Congress. Attempts

to undermine Soviet-American cooperation in business impede the progress of détente and are detrimental to America's own interests as well.

In New York I made the acquaintance of Donald Kendall's friend and big-business colleague, Gabriel Hauge, Chairman of the Board of one of the USA's biggest banks, the Manufacturers Hanover Trust Co. In the annual report signed by Hauge, I read (in almost the same words used in the PepsiCo report) that the bank's turnover had increased thirty percent over the previous year's. The overall figure, I should say, was most impressive: $25 billion. And Hauge, a businessman who must be described as something more than prosperous, is like Kendall a dedicated advocate of economic collaboration with the USSR. The point I am trying to make here is that some of the USA's most successful and influential business leaders are interested in economic ties with our country, and with other socialist countries as well.

The USSR-US Trade and Economic Council was established to help American firms that want to do business with the Soviet Union. Here is what its chairman, Harold Scott, told me.

"There are many international organizations to promote trade, but ours is in a way unique. It not only works to broaden economic cooperation but also offers services to help accomplish that purpose. There is no question that business cooperation between the USA and the USSR will continue to develop successfully; it is to the benefit of both sides. More than five hundred representatives from different American firms have requested the council's assistance already. Over one hundred and seventy-five American firms and over one hundred Soviet organizations maintain ties through us. One of the more important undertakings the council has helped organize recently was a trip to the Soviet Union by a group of leaders in America's tourist industry, which in its makeup was the most representative of any group along this line that has ever visited from the USA. The council has also helped set up a series of working visits to the USA and the USSR at the ministerial level. Last, and most important, our organization, which is made up of American and Soviet business people, is already working as a team."

A businessman, by definition, is someone who only makes deals when they are to his advantage. American business has shown great interest in Soviet technological achievements such as high-voltage power transmission, an improved system for

cooling blast furnaces, and the manufacture of micro-diameter seamless pipes. The list could be greatly extended. American businessmen have bought Soviet patents for aluminum casting in an electromagnetic field and for a modern method of producing magnesium. A representative of the A. E. Anderson Construction Corporation, which has taken out a license to use a Soviet system for evaporation cooling of metal-working furnaces, has said that the method will prolong furnace life by a whole decade. Major American companies such as General Electric, Reynolds Metals, and Kaiser Aluminum have already used Soviet machinery and technology. Thomas Otten Paine, vice-president of General Electric, has said that he regards the signing of an agreement with the Soviet Union for joint work on the development of gas turbines and power generators as one of the corporation's most important achievements.

Even people with no technical background can see that this means the Americans are taking an interest in the achievements of Soviet scientists and engineers. It is interesting to note that the first trade deal between the United States and Soviet Russia was made in 1922, when our country purchased a soap-manufacturing plant for $40,000. A lot of water has passed under the bridge since then, and much has changed. Reciprocal deliveries to be made under a contract concluded with Occidental Petroleum are valued at $8 billion, making this the biggest international economic agreement in history.

U. S. News and World Report, the spokesman of American business, has rightly pointed out that Americans can no longer afford the luxury of limiting trade with the USSR, and that this policy is producing no results whatever. More and more business people in America are reaching the same sober conclusion. Here is one example from among many.

The fashionable and of course very expensive Century Plaza Hotel is located in a posh section of Los Angeles, right next to Hollywood. Walking through its lobbies and hallways, where I encounter captains of American business at every step, it begins to seem to me that the entire business elite of the USA has come together for some extraordinary occasion. It is not only the lobbies and hallways that are crowded, but also the restaurant, the reception halls, and the conference rooms. A number of the hotel's rooms seem to have been turned into secretariats of some sort. Stacks of newly copied documents cover the tables, chairs, and rugs. The atmosphere is not at all formal, but businesslike. Everywhere telephones can be heard

ringing urgently and insistently, and efficient-looking young people hurry back and forth. In a word, the Century Plaza has abandoned its usual life of ease and luxury and is hard at work. The USSR-US Trade and Economic Council is holding its regular session.

Four hundred and fifty of America's leading business people are present. The firms they represent account for one quarter of the USA's gross national product. An issue of *Business Week*, the organ of America's business circles, that came out while the council was in session had an entire forty-two-page section devoted to the USSR as one of the world's great trading nations and to Soviet-American economic relations. The same magazine also printed statements by many leading American business figures calling for broader economic ties between the two countries. It might be said that the appearance of such an issue of *Business Week* was an unprecedented event in the USA. Unfortunately, however, cooperation is not developing on a scale proportional to the economic potential of the two countries. This is not the fault of the Soviet Union. The situation existing today is not in accord with the logic of historical development, the progress of détente, the interests of the peoples of the USA and the USSR, or even, finally, the interests of American business.

After the Los Angeles meeting of the USSR-US Trade and Economic Council, a reception for the heads of the delegations of the two countries was held in the home of Armand Hammer, the celebrated American businessman who established contacts with our country back in the 20s. The friendly discussion, which lasted for several hours, showed once more that both sides are eager to see a significant broadening of trade between the USA and the USSR. Listening to what America's business leaders had to say in this unofficial setting, among their own peers, I was struck yet again by the absurdity of the policies that the enemies of détente and Soviet-American cooperation have seized upon.

Yesterday and Today

This story began a long time ago, at the end of the last century. It is a typically American one, although its old, but still vigorous roots reach far away over the ocean, to the island of Sicily.

The majority in that Mediterranean land is poor and oppressed, while a minority holds the wealth and the power. Such, of course, is the rule for a society dominated by capital. But in Sicily the glaring injustice of the centuries-old order was made still more unbearable by the traditional reliance of the powerful on well-organized armed bands. The rich recruited hired killers from among the local people, and these unquestioningly did as they were told. It was a simple system, and it never failed. It had existed from time out of mind, and included not only the rich and the bandits but also the governing authorities, who were either bought heart and soul or compelled by mortal fear.

All this was backed by the unshakable strength of tradition, supported not only by money and terror but also by blood, kinship, and the bonds of community, which took the form of a secret organization called the Mafia. The Mafia was truly indestructible. It was not so much an organization as a specifically Sicilian way of life. Its members call it a benevolent society, and think of themselves as honorable men. The writer Loschiavo, one of those who has studied the Mafia, testifies to this. Loschiavo was more than a detached observer of his subject, having been a judge in Sicily for many years.

This "philosophy" was derived from greatly distorted ideas about morality, from a most idiosyncratic understanding of honor and pride, from bonds of family and clan, and finally from an almost inbred reverence for the right of the strong that had persisted in this backward island after the breakdown of the feudal system. The collapse of feudalism in Sicily had been greatly protracted by the primitiveness of production, of social relations, and of the socio-political forms of Sicilian society. Historians tell us that it was during this period that the Mafia arose as an instrument of the propertied villagers. The objective conditions under which the Mafia was formed made it ruthless and reactionary from the very beginning. All of this explains the peculiar ritualistic

organization of the Mafia, its rigid hierarchical structure, and its archaic rural medievalism.

There is another name for the members of the Sicilian Mafia: the Knights of the Lupara. The lupara is an old-fashioned wolf-hunting rifle loaded with buckshot, traditionally used by the Mafia to destroy its enemies. The wounds it inflicts leave the victim no chance of survival. The Knights of the Lupara are consecrated in a ceremony during which they swear loyalty to the Mafia in their own blood and burn a scrap of paper with a skull and crossbones drawn on it in a candle flame.

The fundamental law of the Mafia is Omerta — death vengeance on anyone who betrays its members to the authorities or reveals its secrets. It is not only members of the Mafia who are subject to Omerta.

At times accusations of betrayal were used (and are still used) to settle personal scores, to gain power within the Mafia, or to seize the land and property of a neighbor. Shots rang out, blood was shed, and the vendetta was handed down through the generations like a treasured inheritance. The vicious circle of ruthlessness was imposed and sanctioned by the uncrowned kings of Sicily, the wealthy villagers. Their regime was founded on terror, and in this atmosphere, reeking of gunpowder and fear, they could always be sure of finding plenty of qualified assassins for hire.

In the last century, when waves of immigrants were rolling one after another up to the shores of America, Sicilians too came in search of the promised land — and among them members of the Mafia. American sources indicate that the influx of bandits from across the ocean began in the 1860s. It seems that they came for a variety of reasons. Some probably came in search of fortune, hoping to grow rich in the new land as they could not at home. Others may have been fleeing from vengeance; still others, from poverty. (The bandits, of course, had never shared their booty equally.) It may be that the heads of the Mafia also sent men to investigate these new shores. The changing times were forcing even the Sicilian Mafia to adapt to the rhythms of the nineteenth century, to fall into step with the universal advance of capitalism. Little by little the rural Sicilian Mafia was extending its activities to the cities. Its distinctive agricultural character had begun to give way to new forms of gangsterism, such as traffic in narcotics and the gambling industry. Most important of all, the organization was becoming covertly but actively involved in political life.

So it was that the first immigrants from the ranks of the Mafia to arrive in the USA were not the same sort of benighted and obtuse village thugs that their predecessors on the island had been. Above all, they arrived with a firm grounding in strict discipline and secrecy and a knowledge of how an effective underground organization operates. It would, however, be a grave error to date the existence of organized crime in America to the arrival of the first Sicilian bandits.

The closing years of the last century were marked by vigorous development of capitalism in the USA. As was inevitable under this new unjust order, various ills, among which was an upsurge of crime, advanced apace with the progress of industry, science, and technology. The first Mafia bandits arrived in the United States to find it already abundantly supplied with criminals. Most of the gangs were organized along national lines: Irishmen, Jews, Mexicans, and so on. They had a head start on the Sicilians in their criminal activities, but not one of them possessed the sort of experience the newcomers brought with them from their faraway Mediterranean island, the organization, cohesiveness, and sense of shared interests and blood ties, of longstanding outlaw traditions that took the place of law and morality among them.

The different American gangs, each based on national loyalties, were engaged in fierce and bloody rivalries as arduous as their struggle with the law. In these ceaseless clashes the experienced and battle-hardened Sicilians soon gained a decisive advantage. They joined ranks in a criminal organization modeled after the Sicilian Mafia. At first it was called the Mano Nero (Black Hand); later it became known as the Cosa Nostra (Our Business). As they had back in Sicily, the gangsters relied on the solidarity of thousands of their countrymen who were not actively involved in the criminal association. The emigrants brought the Mafia with them to the USA not only as an underground syndicate but also as a basic element of the Sicilian way of life.

The Mano Nero specialized in blackmail and extortion, although its members were not above ordinary robbery. The organization quickly became a power to be reckoned with. The US authorities were alarmed. It is interesting to note that the American police, in their struggle with the Mano Nero, soon directed their attention to Sicily. This shows how closely the Sicilian-American gangsters were tied to their kinsmen and colleagues in the old country. An American police official was sent to the island on an official visit the purpose of

which, as the New York press reported in February of 1909, was to gather information about the Italian criminal elements that had entered the USA. Together with the Italian police, he was to investigate the criminal activities both of the bandits who had emigrated to the USA and of those still active in Sicily. A few days after his arrival in Palermo, he was shot in the back. His assassin was not apprehended.

Today organized crime is as pitiless as ever in destroying anyone it perceives as an enemy. At the same time, the gangsters are relentless in destroying one another, like scorpions or spiders in a jar. As a direct product of capitalist society — its bastard offspring, as it were — they have inherited all of its unlovely characteristics. Among these is the unending, tireless search for profit (the main object of life!) in a fierce and even bloodthirsty rivalry. The sole difference between the world of legal business and the world of criminal business is that in the first competitors are eliminated with the dollar, while in the second bullets are used.

One of the first cases involving Sicilian bandits to find its way into the criminal annals of the USA dates from 1890. In that year an ordinary gangland struggle erupted into scandal when a policeman who was to give important testimony was killed on the very eve of his appearance.

The history of American crime also records the name of one of the first and most important organizers of the Mafia's migration to the USA and its penetration into the American underworld — Don Vito Cascio Ferro. He rose to leadership in the Sicilian Mafia and then, in the United States, headed the Mano Nero. A student of the Mafia wrote that it was the school of Don Vito Cascio Ferro that turned out the Mafia leaders who transplanted to America, more than fifty years ago, the criminal business that now flourishes there. Incidentally, Don Vito Cascio Ferro was one of those responsible for the murder of a police official, described above. But he had a strong alibi: a member of the local parliament swore that Don Vito had been in his apartment at the time the policeman was killed. Here we see another familiar fact, the tie between gangland bosses and politicians, which was to grow from this beginning to the astounding dimensions it has today.

The opinion of American authors on the subject is that organized crime in the United States was finally consolidated into a single national organization during Prohibition, which lasted from 1920 to 1933. The gangsters were quick to turn the ban on legal sales of strong drink to their own use, and

reaped fabulous profits from it. There was a vicious struggle for control of the bootlegging business, in which the organization founded by the bandits who had emigrated from Sicily gained the upper hand. Little by little this organization spread throughout the USA, but the struggle for power and dollars on which it was based went on without interruption. It was in 1930, while the dry law that brought the Cosa Nostra such monstrous profits was still in effect, that the so-called Castellammarese War began. It was named after the Sicilian town of Castellammare del Golfo, where many of the founders of the Cosa Nostra had been born. The bloodshed began when one Giuseppe Masseria, the leading underworld figure of that time, decided to take singlehanded control of the gangland organization. His closest colleagues (and competitors!) were Salvatore Luciano, Don Vito Genovese, Salvatore Maranzano, and Al Capone. The first two were Masseria's most faithful friends and henchmen, Al Capone, known as the "King of Chicago," was head of that city's underground. Maranzano occupied the same position in New York.

In the course of the struggle, Masseria attempted to remove some of his closest associate-competitors. As could only be expected they were opposed to any such move. They had Masseria killed in a restaurant. Salvatore Maranzano thereupon became head of the Cosa Nostra, and it was he who finally realized Masseria's dream. The structure that he gave the Cosa Nostra has endured to this day. The national organization is divided into "families," each with its own territory. The partition was made not so much for the sake of order as to share out the national market into zones of influence or hunting grounds. The idea was to avoid a recrudescence of the struggle within the Cosa Nostra, but even after the reorganization the infighting among leaders continued.

Salvatore (Lucky) Luciano and Vito Genovese, having just betrayed their boss, Masseria, who considered them his assistants and closest comrades, proceeded to deal the same way with their new master, Maranzano. For the sake of fairness, however, let it be noted that in both cases Luciano and Genovese acted to forestall similar intentions against themselves; if they had not eliminated the boss, he would have eliminated them. Masseria had been shot in a restaurant; Maranzano's death overtook him in his home. Several of Luciano's bodyguards, professional killers, disguised themselves as policemen and gained entrance with a forged search warrant. After repeatedly shooting Maranzano they slit his

throat for good measure. That same day forty other members of the Cosa Nostra died in the feud. Salvatore Luciano, known as Lucky, became the new head of the organization.

Rivers of blood flowed back in the days when the Cosa Nostra was taking its final shape. There was bloodshed enough in the subsequent periods of its history too, and the killing goes on today. Nonetheless, as the Cosa Nostra has continued to put its house in order since World War II, it has sometimes happened that bosses have lived to die a natural death, in their own beds. Such tranquillity has been largely helped along by the underground's penetration into legitimate business, the perfectly natural merger of these two spheres of endeavor — of which more later.

Under Lucky Luciano, a façade of collective leadership was thrown up — the so-called Commission, whose members were the bosses of the principal "families." In fact, Luciano was the "boss of bosses." Even under his single-handed rule, though, the struggle for power in the upper echelon continued. Here Luciano once again displayed the luck that had earned him his nickname. He escaped death at the hands of his "brothers," departing instead into exile in 1946 to live off his ill-gotten millions. Frank Costello became the ruler of the USA's underground, after driving another gang leader, Vito Genovese, into exile. Genovese had fled in fear for his life, but having spent some years back in his homeland making thorough preparations for the struggle to capture the throne of the "boss of bosses," he returned to the United States. In 1957 one of his hired killers murdered Frank Costello. At last Genovese stood at the head of the syndicate.

Like many of his predecessors, Genovese began with a show of peace-making. He called a "national conference" of the Cosa Nostra's leaders. The meeting took place on November 14, 1957, and not at some out-of-the-way site but on the farm of an ageing gangster, Joseph Barbara, in upstate New York. About one hundred leaders of the Cosa Nostra were in attendance. The crowded agenda included many questions, from cooperation between "families" to the trade in narcotics. While the bosses were in session a local police sergeant, alerted by the extraordinary number of Rolls Royces and Lincolns at the usually quiet farm, called in several squad cars. About half the gangsters were arrested, but since there were only a handful of policemen the rest managed to escape. Even at that, it was quite a catch. Half of the Cosa Nostra's leaders behind bars! It was beyond the wildest dreams of American law enforcement.

Here, though, the laws — or rather the paradoxes — of American society came into play: all of those arrested were released. Each of them was a familiar figure to the police, but behind each of them were millions of ill-gotten dollars. A rich criminal seldom gets his deserts under American justice. In this instance, as in most others, the gangsters went scot-free, inasmuch as they had not been caught red-handed at the farm. All of them claimed they were only visiting their sick friend, Barbara.

By the time of the "national conference," the heads of the Cosa Nostra and their principal henchmen were no longer underground figures. Their emergence into public view was not a matter of choice, though, but something thrust on them by the facts of American life. They were, after all, millionaires, and living the way millionaires are supposed to: in mansions on their country estates, with lots of servants (or rather bodyguards), and so forth. What is more, their capital and power gave them great influence not only in the underworld but also in business and public affairs. The press and other media dwelt endlessly, not to say gloatingly, on their wealth and all its trappings. In short, most of the USA's gangland bosses had risen above the law.

Oddly enough, the publicity the gangsters received as remarkable (and above all, wealthy) men completely overlooked their mighty underground organization. In American public opinion they stood as if in isolation, unconnected with their criminal syndicate, which in fact was pretended to be nonexistent. Yes, the chroniclers of America's underworld admitted, there is crime, and there are big criminals, but there is no organized crime as such, and no nationwide syndicate of criminals either. This clever fabrication (no doubt handsomely paid for by the Cosa Nostra) was subscribed to by unofficial and official sources alike for a long time. Even J. Edgar Hoover, the head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, stubbornly maintained for many years that there was no organized crime in the USA. It would have seemed that no one in the USA was more knowledgeable about this subject than Hoover. He was head of the FBI for nearly half a century, under four Democratic and four Republican administrations — eight successive presidents! It was during this unique and unrepeatable tenure that the Cosa Nostra acquired its monstrous strength, but somehow Hoover failed to notice. Later I will comment on several aspects of the strange (to say the least) behavior of the FBI's director. As for the Cosa Nostra, it lost no time in making full use of

what may certainly be called the benign neglect, if not the indulgence, of the law's representative, the FBI.

It was not until the late 50s that the FBI was forced to change its stance. Despite strict secrecy within the Cosa Nostra, despite the complicity of the authorities (or at least of the FBI), the existence of a nationwide criminal syndicate in the USA was finally brought out into the open.

A certain Joseph Valachi, an associate of gangland boss Vito Genovese, was sent to prison. Not for being a member of the Cosa Nostra, but for an ordinary crime that the judges had not tied to the existence of any underground syndicate. It was only by coincidence that Valachi did not serve out his term and then emerge from prison to continue his comfortable existence in the Cosa Nostra. As it happened, though, Valachi came to be suspected of having turned informer to the FBI. In keeping with outlaw traditions, Valachi was given to understand that he had been found out and condemned to death. His confinement in prison, he knew, was no guarantee of his safety. The vengeance of the Cosa Nostra knows no barriers. In fact, it is easier for the gang to eliminate an enemy in prison: he cannot escape, and one or another of his fellow prisoners will gladly execute the death sentence in return for the gratitude, money, and favor of the Cosa Nostra or simply for fear of his own life if he refuses to obey.

Thus Joseph Valachi waited from day to day for an attempt on his life. As an old gangster he knew the ways of the organization well. He was certain that one of the other prisoners was to be his executioner. Ridden with fear, he suddenly decided during an exercise period that one of the other inmates was about to kill him. This may have been so, or it may be that Valachi's nerves simply snapped. He snatched up a piece of metal pipe that was lying on the ground and bludgeoned to death another prisoner who had approached him. For this killing Valachi received the death sentence. But he did not want to die. He struck a bargain for his life. He told the authorities the secrets of the Cosa Nostra, and in return his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment.

Valachi was quick to explain to his keepers that his life was in danger, and they transferred him at once to a military base, where he began to tell the story of the Cosa Nostra. The organization set a very high price on the traitor's head: one million dollars would go to the man who silenced Valachi. But the fort, where Valachi was kept under heavy guard in a concrete bunker, proved impenetrable even to the Cosa Nostra.

With these exotic surroundings to inspire him, Valachi penned more than a thousand pages of testimony.

At last the Cosa Nostra had emerged from the realm of surmise and fiction as a reality of American life. The facts proved stronger than even the all-powerful Hoover, who for decades as head of the FBI had turned a blind eye towards organized crime. But Valachi's revelations left the Cosa Nostra untouched. Only now people spoke of it as a well-known fact, rather than an idle fancy of the crime novelists. Its bloody feuds and business cunning, the ruthlessness and scope of its operations (every bit a match for those of legal business) were now common knowledge. The FBI had no choice but to open a dossier on the Cosa Nostra, which now contains many extraordinary documents.

At first, Valachi's revelations seemed to have thrown the FBI into a state of shock. Then, having recovered a bit, Hoover's potent organizations went through the motions of launching a crash campaign to eradicate the evil so unexpectedly disclosed. This campaign was accompanied by the typical American hue and cry in the media. Then in 1972, after Americans had been led to believe that the Cosa Nostra was no more, another gangland war broke out in the USA. The criminal forces supposedly destroyed by the FBI were announcing their presence with pistol shots and bursts of submachine-gun fire.

The first to die was Joe Colombo, one of the heads of the New York branch of the Cosa Nostra. Then Joe Gallo (known as Crazy Joe) was killed in revenge for the murder of Colombo. In their youth, by the way, Colombo and Gallo had been members of the same five-man death squad. In 1971 the two New York "families" they headed went to war. As always happens in such cases, other "families" within the organization soon became involved in the bloodletting. Shots rang out, and the ranks of the gangland bosses were thinned. When the smoke cleared it became apparent that the feud had been engineered by Carlo Gambino, the boss of one of the five New York "families." Now that all his main rivals had been eliminated, Gambino became the Cosa Nostra's "boss of bosses." At this time he was already over seventy, but as we have seen his years did not hinder him in mounting yet another drama on the gaudy stage of American life.

Carlo Gambino did not long enjoy the fruits of his bloody intriguing. He died in New York in the fall of 1976, at age seventy-four. He died, oddly enough, in his own bed, of

natural causes. His death and funeral were a sensation of the first order in the USA. Enormous attention was given to it by all the mass media. The entire elite of the Cosa Nostra gathered to lay America's head gangster to rest, and the event also attracted the stars of American radio and television and of the national press.

Soon after Carlo Gambino went to his reward the syndicate was once again embroiled in a struggle for power, for the vacant throne of the "boss of bosses." The fighting was not confined to New York; it swept throughout the nationwide network of Cosa Nostra "families." Again the shots rang out, and dozens of gangland leaders died at the hands of their colleagues.

Little by little one of the veterans of the organization advanced to the throne. His name was Carmine Galante, and he reigned over the Cosa Nostra's New York fief. It was known that he was a millionaire, that he was responsible for at least a hundred murders, and that he lived in Manhattan, in the very center of New York, under the guise of a respectable bourgeois and small businessman. Here we have a remarkable example of protective mimicry, a gangster who blends into the society around him. Oh, he's only the owner of a small dry-cleaning establishment, a devout Catholic, a green-thumbed tomato grower, and of course an ardent patriot — just try criticizing the government or the American way of life when he's around! All this information and a great deal more was retailed by the American media when it became known that Galante had ascended the throne of the Cosa Nostra. The *New York Times*, for example, devoted almost a whole page to such tidbits, and the *Sunday News* several pages. Readers were told what foods the ageing gangster preferred. They learned about his pet dog, which he cared for personally, and were given a detailed sketch of his character and habits. (He was one of the most bloodthirsty bosses in the history of the Cosa Nostra.) It was reported that Galante watched every penny, that he was a fitness buff (he stuck to his program even in prison), and that he had always had connections with the high and mighty (he used to deal with Mussolini's enemies, at the Duce's personal request). The journalists furnished many other facts too. For example, they described his luxurious gold car and noted that his twenty-year old daughter Nina acted as his driver. True, as soon as this information appeared in the press Galante hired several chauffeurs in her place.

One of the forms American radio and television use to keep in touch with their audiences is the "call-in show." Viewers or listeners are invited to call the studio with questions, and the announcer answers them on the air. Here is what one woman asked on a call-in radio show in New York: "I read the article about the Mafia in the latest issue of *Time* magazine. There's just one thing I can't understand. If a lot of these gangsters are so well known that the reporters can even tell us who is number one in one family and who is number two in another, why can't anybody do something about them?"

"That's a good question," the announcer said. "I don't understand that myself. Who else wants to ask something? Call me here at the studio and tell me what's on your mind."

Yes, the sort of life a gangland boss leads in the United States turns the normal laws of human society topsyturvy. But there are even stranger facts to be told about that way of life.

In 1978 Carmine Galante served time in prison on a charge of trafficking in narcotics. He was detained in downtown New York, where he was watched over not only by regular guards but also by members of his gangland "family." That's right: every day gun-totting gangsters were admitted to the prison, where they stood watch outside the cell that held Carmine Galante. When their shift was over they were relieved by other gangsters. Imagine it: prison guards and gangsters, shoulder to shoulder, standing watch. True, their concerns were different. The prison guards were there to do their regular job, to see that Galante did not get away. The gangsters were there to make sure their boss lived to finish his sentence. It seems Galante's main rival in the struggle for power, Aniello Delacroce, had put out a death warrant on him. Delacroce was one of the most prominent figures in the Cosa Nostra. He had been Carlo Gambino's number two man. Thus it seemed only fitting that he should be the next "boss of bosses." What was more, Delacroce was a member of the organization's highest governing body, the so-called Commission. Like many other top gangsters, he had started out as a hired killer, executing men marked for death by the Cosa Nostra. He knew how to go about these things. His order to eliminate his rival could not fail to alarm Galante and his associates, who kept close watch over their boss — with the blessings of the authorities, of course — even while he was in prison.

It seems Galante had good reason to take precautions. In a different prison, far from New York, another Cosa Nostra gangster was serving out his sentence. His name was Carmine

too — Carmine Persico. He was one of the organization's professional executioners, a hit man. But he was in prison for hijacking a plane, not for murder. Persico, or rather the men behind him, had arranged for his transfer to the same prison where Galante was. Incidentally, it is quite possible that Persico had landed behind bars on purpose, at his bosses' orders, to kill Galante. He was already on his way to New York when the prison authorities sensed that something was amiss and halted the move.

All of these jockeyings in the struggle for chieftanship in the Cosa Nostra ended with Carmine Galante's being released from prison in July of 1979 and murdered in a restaurant. It was a typical killing in the gangland style. Galante was having lunch, surrounded by his bodyguards. Suddenly four men in masks burst in and riddled him with bullets from a submachine gun. They fled immediately, and no clue was ever found to their identity. As can be seen from the Cosa Nostra's history, competition of this sort is a general law.

The Cosa Nostra of today is a true underworld syndicate. It is headed by a sort of board of directors, the Commission, which is made up of the bosses of the nine largest "families." The whole of the USA is divided into twenty-six territories, each ruled by a different "family." It should be noted that New York alone has five "families," whose bosses usually are members of the Commission. The total number of the Cosa Nostra's members is not at all large: around five thousand. This includes the bosses of the "families," their advisers and deputies, the "lieutenants," and the "soldiers." Considering the organization's small membership, it is understandable that even the "soldiers," not to mention the "lieutenants," are men of substance. Most of the leaders and their closest associates are millionaires.

I have never been in the headquarters of the Cosa Nostra, of course. But I have visited the head offices of many big American companies and banks, seen how they work, and written about them. The structure of today's Cosa Nostra is strikingly similar to the smoothly functioning organization of the largest American firms. The gangsters, while remaining true to many of their Sicilian traditions, have benefited by taking over the organizational experience of American business.

Even with all the Cosa Nostra's organizational efficiency, however, it would not be able to spread over the entire country without the active help of its one hundred thousand or so confederates. Most of these individuals are criminals who

have not yet been accepted into the organization's ranks: drug dealers, pimps, loan sharks, gambling racketeers, and the like. They carry out the orders of the gang's members, for which they of course receive certain rewards. This system makes the Cosa Nostra still more invulnerable. Its members are almost never implicated; it is usually the organization's hangers-on who are caught first, giving the active members the time and opportunity to hide their tracks. Finally, the syndicate is closely connected with the worlds of politics and business, with the police, with the country's top lawyers, and so on. Many prominent members of these groups are on the gangsters' payroll.

All of this adds up to something phenomenal: the Cosa Nostra's vast network of crime brings in $50 billion a year! This is a very conservative estimate, made by the federal authorities in Washington. What does $ 50 billion a year mean? In the first place, it is equal to one tenth of the USA's national budget. Second, it dwarfs the income of any American corporation; Exxon, the USA's largest corporation and biggest profit maker, takes in just over $2.5 billion a year. Third, the Cosa Nostra's income exceeds the total profits of the American auto industry, or the value of all the stocks sold on the New York exchange in a year. The Mafia is now America's fastest-growing industry, its mightiest corporation, and state within a state!

Gangster Businessmen

The principal strength of the Cosa Nostra today, and the pledge of its future prosperity, is its increasingly active penetration, with its enormous capital, into legitimate business. One report by a United States Senate committee lists more than seventy fields of business in which thousands of underworld figures are active; among them are advertising, insurance, banking, credit agencies, unions, horse and dog tracks, telegraph agencies, information about the races, scandal sheets (as yellow journalism productions are known), the entertainment industry, equipment for casinos, race tracks, arcade games, dance halls, gambling houses, pool halls, juke boxes, theaters and cinemas, commercial mailings, the import of certain articles, auto sales and servicing, garages, gas stations, transportation, printing and lithographing, electrical equipment, radio, the manufacture and selling of televisions, construction, the coal industry,

copper mining, the manufacture of rubber, the steel industry, oil exploration, furniture making, the textile and clothing industries, washing machines, dye-works, tailor shops, milk stores, wholesale and retail liquor merchandising, tobacco sales, florists, hotels, restaurants, taverns, bars, nightclubs, fishing, and ranching.

What an odd list it is! And even at that it is far from complete. It was drawn up over ten years ago, when American officialdom had only just begun to admit to itself that the country was being consumed by an incurable disease — organized crime. In 1978 a special investigating committee on organized crime found that gangsters were investing in forty-six areas of legitimate business, including coal, oil, metallurgical, and auto-building companies. The US Department of Justice believes that the Cosa Nostra owns some ten thousand legal businesses, which have a total yearly income of twelve billion dollars. The syndicate's incursions into legal business are financed with profits from traditional criminal activities, the so-called rackets: extortion through blackmail, gambling, traffic in narcotics, high-interest loans, pornography, and prostitution.

The Cosa Nostra of today, then, has all the trappings of a corporation — a corporation of criminals. Each of its members, from the moment he enters the syndicate, assumes the guise of a businessman. In fact, today's gangsters really are businessmen, through and through. A new "soldier," let us say, is taken into the Cosa Nostra. As a rule he will start in a modest job: driving a veteran gangster's car and serving as his bodyguard, or strong-arming a loan shark's clients into paying up. At the same time he will be given an official position in a legitimate firm controlled wholly or in part by the Cosa Nostra. From the very beginning of his career the "soldier" will be steeped not only in the ways of the underworld but also in the uses of respectable firms; he will become not only a master criminal but also a businessman. And beginning at once with his acceptance into the ranks, the recruit will have an annual income in the tens of thousands, made up from the following sources: a share of the take of his "family," cash bonuses from his boss, and a salary from the firm or enterprise where he is nominally employed. Here is a typical example, which was reported in the press.

One of the syndicate's rank-and-filers was receiving $50,000 a year from a travel agency and $30,000 from a finance company. This was in addition to his earnings in the Cosa Nostra itself. His income allowed him to buy an $80,000 house, two limousines for himself and one for his wife, and a $112,000 yacht, and also to keep horses for his children. Not bad for a gangster businessman who was just getting started!

It might seem at first glance that a gangster businessman is a paradox, a split personality. In fact, he is nothing of the kind, but a natural fusion of two remarkably similar elements. Gangsters ensconce themselves in the upholstered chairs of business offices not only, or even mostly, to give themselves an air of legitimacy and respectability, but rather to make money out of money — that is, to do what all businessmen do.

Here are two examples from a Senate committee report. A certain Joe Fusco, one of the heads of the Chicago branch of the Cosa Nostra, established himself as a major wholesale liquor supplier. His colleague Abner Zwillman had diversified business holdings; he was co-owner of a cigarette vending machine factory, an auto sales agency, a car parts manufacturer, and a 700-machine laundromat.

In some cases the way today's gangsters make money from their legitimate operations is identical to regular business practice; in others, it is complicated by the use of such operations to "launder" profits from underworld rackets by putting them in circulation in "clean" businesses. Both gangsters and regular businessmen, however, are ruled by the same age-old principle: Money never stinks. This means that "dirty" and "clean" money find an equal welcome in legitimate business and on the stock market, just as gangster businessmen are welcomed into the world of legitimate business. It is only to foil the laws of America that the gangsters' money needs to be "laundered." The law too, when it comes to that, has its price (in dollars) in every individual case. All that is needed is the money to pay. The Cosa Nostra has it.

That is one side of the question — the business side, so to speak. But there is a moral and social side too, which is also of considerable importance. Combining the careers of gangster and businessman, the Cosa Nostra member blends smoothly into bourgeois society as its natural product. By and large, he is well satisfied with the laws of that society (the bosses are known for their wild-eyed patriotism), and not only with its judicial and financial systems, but also with its morality. An American journalist once asked several gangsters what had drawn them to organized crime. Their answer: "Money, power, recognition, and respect." The same motto is invisibly engraved on every business, whether or not it has ties to the underworld.

From time to time members of the Cosa Nostra are brought before the courts, but very seldom does justice triumph in such

cases. In the past several years, fifty-two percent of the gangsters who were convicted got off with no more than a fine, and only twenty percent received prison sentences of more than two years. The press has rightly pointed out that a bank robber with a pistol, who makes off with a couple of thousand dollars, fits the average American judge's idea of a criminal much better than an elegantly dressed gangster surrounded by a phalanx of slick lawyers — even though the gangster may have robbed society of millions.

The Cosa Nostra, in its search for profits, has reached into various areas of American business life, as can be seen from the story of how the gangsters seized control of many unions. It might be asked what could interest organized crime in union work. The answer, of course, is money, the unions' treasuries.

About thirty years ago a certain Jimmy Hoffa, an American youngster of Italian descent, decided to carve out a career for himself in the unions. There was no denying his energy and adroitness. He was also a thorough demagogue, and totally lacking in principle. He attracted notice, and not only from the union leadership. The heads of the Cosa Nostra were also interested in him. They helped him establish himself as a minor union official, and then made him boss of one of the USA's biggest labor organizations (more than two million members!), the Teamsters Union.

In the United States trucks have long since replaced trains as the principal means of transporting freight. Day and night thousands of huge trucks rush back and forth over the USA's surpassingly well developed network of highways. Trucks are a vital link in the American economy, and their drivers, the teamsters, are among the country's best paid working people. This naturally means that the Teamsters Union is a wealthy organization. So the gangsters seized control of it and ran it as they saw fit for a quarter of a century, using Hoffa as their puppet. Moreover, this fact was no secret to anyone. Hoffa was continually under suspicion of wrongdoings, continually on trial or under investigation, but the sharpest lawyers in the country (and of course the best paid) always found a way to get their client off. The law could not touch the teamster boss, just as it could not touch the rest of the "cream" of American society. Hoffa, meanwhile, enjoyed all the priviliges of his station. Even in those days he had a salary of $125,000 a year. He owned three palatial residences — one in Washington, one in California, and one in Florida. His other possessions included that modern American symbol of power and wealth,

a personal jet. Above all, Hoffa had high-placed connections in politics and business, not to mention the powerful backing of the Cosa Nostra.

The gangsters find it easy to turn the union's operations to their own ends. For example, the union has a billion-dollar retirement fund. Under the law, of course, this money must not be used to make more money through investment or speculation on the stock market. But the gangster businessmen who specialize in union work know how to get around the law, how to put the union's funds to work and siphon off the profits. The conditions under which big business operates in America — and there can be no doubt that the unions are big business — make it difficult for the law to do anything about criminal machinations with union funds.

The corruption in Hoffa's union was an open secret, but not one charge against him could be made to stick. The brazenness with which he held on to his post and his national notoriety reflected considerable discredit on the so-called democracy of bourgeois America. Things came to such a pass that one of John Kennedy's campaign promises was to put Jimmy Hoffa in jail. And indeed he was no sooner inaugurated than he appointed his brother Robert Attorney General and launched an attack on Hoffa. The teamster boss, however, was a tough nut to crack, even for the President of the United States.

Yes, John Kennedy's life ended before he was able to deal with Hoffa. It was only after his death that his brother, who remained Attorney General for some little time after, managed to make good the promise. Incidentally, the real story behind President Kennedy's assassination, which the powers that be in America have tried to obscure, is being unraveled year by year, and there is no longer any doubt that the Cosa Nostra was involved. Both of the Kennedy brothers took the risk of making war on the organization (and on Jimmy Hoffa as part of it), and both were shot to death by hired killers.

But let us return to Hoffa. Through a series of intrigues as knotted as any detective novel's, he was not only put on trial but finally convicted. One of his main henchmen had fallen into the hands of the law and faced the prospect of spending the rest of his life behind bars. He was promised clemency if he would help build a case against his boss. Even with his help the authorities were able to substantiate just one of the charges against Hoffa, but that was enough to entangle him in the web of his own lies. During one of Hoffa's innumerable trials he resorted to his favorite trick, bribing the jurors, and

was caught red-handed. Then yet another of his dirty deals came to light, and the previously invulnerable boss was sentenced to thirteen years' imprisonment.

But the paradoxes of American life were not suspended after Hoffa's arrest. The union leadership ordered that even while the head man was behind bars he would continue to receive his salary ($125,000 a year). This alone must have helped the teamster boss not a little in bearing his enforced idleness and loss of freedom. Indeed he continued to feel that he was the boss while in prison. It was as if he had simply given up his richly appointed offices for a time. Before going off to prison he had given all the necessary orders. He had placed his chief deputy, Frank Fitzsimmons, in charge of the union's day-to-day business, and handed over its finances to Allen Dorfman. Not only was Dorfman a professional gangster — his stepfather had been an associate of the infamous Al Capone. Hoffa too, incidentally, had gotten his start in the union through Capone's Chicago "family," and so the appointment of Dorfman had a double motivation. Hoffa was packed off to serve his time, but the Teamsters Union remained firmly in the hands of the gangsters, faithfully serving as the Cosa Nostra's own bank. In his absence all the decisions were made by Fitzsimmons and Dorfman.

After serving five years of his thirteen-year sentence, Hoffa was released for "good behavior." A good deal of water had passed under the bridge while he was gone. Most importantly, the heads of the Cosa Nostra were very pleased with the job Fitzsimmons and Dorfman had been doing. In fact they did not want Hoffa back at all. He had been released on condition that he stay out of union activities, and he was greatly irritated when he learned that his closest associates had arranged for the restriction. In short, his masters had no more use for him: he was old and lazy and disreputable. Hoffa refused to accept this. He fought to regain the leadership of what he thought of as his own union. But Fitzsimmons, another gangster protégé, had been found more suitable than Hoffa. He was firmly entrenched at the top.

Hoffa was not allowed to press his claim for long. One day he disappeared without a trace, the way that people the Cosa Nostra regards as enemies usually do. It was later proved that he had been murdered by the syndicate, but neither his body nor his killer was ever discovered. Everything remained as before in the Teamsters Union, but now under the official leadership of Fitzsimmons rather than Hoffa.

So much for the gangster businessmen, with their widely diversified interests. What about their colleagues, though, the ones who are supposed to be on the other side of the law? Is there a clear boundary, visible or invisible, between legal and illegal business in the USA? Let us look at the facts of American life.

The *New Republic*, an American magazine, reports in an article about crime in the US business world* that of the many American firms that have been officially investigated ninety-seven percent were found to be not only violators of the nation's laws, but repeat offenders, guilty on two or more counts. All of their crimes were tied to one thing: illegal profits. Let us recall the case of International Telephone and Telegraph (ITT), one of the USA's largest corporations. In its relentless quest for profits ITT had broken the law, and an investigation began. But after ITT contributed $400,000 to the campaign fund of the Republican Party, which was then in power, the case suddenly melted away. The law is meek and acquiescent before the millionaire criminals of the official business world, just as it is in the world of illegal business. Over a ten-year period, seventy-nine percent of the cases in which corporations were accused of breaking the law were settled out of court.

Bribery and graft are far from being the only crimes that perfectly "legitimate" businessmen commit. I was once the guest of some American scientists who were working on the prediction of earthquakes. This was in California, where earthquakes occur with some frequency. The latest advances had enabled the scientists to draw up a map of the state indicating areas that might be stricken in the near future. Such maps would hurt realtors and people in all sorts of businesses connected with the threatened areas. What did they care about the scientists' predictions, or the possibility of disaster? They were worried about their business, their profits! They mounted a campaign of threats and blackmail against the seismologists, and even attempted to sue them, to sue science itself for getting in the way of their profit-making, for the damage supposedly inflicted on their business.

Many of my readers no doubt remember the incident at Three Mile Island, where an accident at a nuclear power plant endangered a large area. It was only by chance that casualties were avoided. Later it came out that the terrible menace had arisen because the owners of the plant, in their greed for

* By this purely American logic, the present chapter might have been titled "Business in the U.S. Criminal World."

profits, had been skimping on the most elementary safety precautions.

There can be no hope of success in the struggle against organized crime, against the Cosa Nostra, under the conditions that exist in America. This is acknowledged even by those whose duty it is to lead that struggle. The reason, they say, is that in many ways criminal business has become indistinguishable from legitimate business.

A Sinister Symbiosis

Even in the United States, though, man does not live by business alone. No one there can seriously engage in business without having to get involved in politics. This is the rule, and gangsters who become businessmen are no exception. A Senate committee that investigated organized crime in the USA noted in its report that crime, politics, and business are coalescing into a sinister trinity.

This subject, incidentally, is taboo in the American media. The shifting fortunes of gangland wars, the bloody struggle for power within the Cosa Nostra, the luxurious life of its bosses, their business cunning and enterprise — it is possible to read about all this in the USA. But the syndicate's political connections are publicly mentioned only in the most extreme cases, and then only highly curtailed and oblique information is given. Nonetheless, the Cosa Nostra (as will be clear from what follows) conducts political dealings on the highest level. This is not in the least surprising: the syndicate, being in fact the USA's largest corporation, naturally has political aces up its sleeve.

A certain Cornelius Gallagher, for example, once occupied a seat in the US House of Representatives, where he was indisputably a star of the first magnitude. The New Jersey Democrat had all the hallmarks of an outstanding leader. He was one of the senior members of the Foreign Affairs Committee, chairman of a Canadian-American interparliamentary group, and a US delegate to disarmament conferences. At one time he was even considered as a possible vice-presidential candidate.

Gallagher had not confined himself to politics. He was also a lawyer, director of a bank, and co-owner of a construction business. His main strength, however, was kept secret from the voters. Only the heads of the Cosa Nostra knew that

his deepest allegiance was not to his constituents and his home state of New Jersey but to gangster boss Joe Zicarelli. A police investigation into Zicarelli's activities uncovered the Congressman's longstanding connection with organized crime: he had not only, at Zicarelli's orders, helped settle the syndicate's conflicts with the authorities, but also taken an active part in its criminal and business undertakings. When Zicarelli decided to take financial control of an airline in the Dominican Republic (a venture of no great moment for one of the chiefs of the Cosa Nostra), he brought Gallagher along to Santo Domingo to close the deal.

Here is another example of how the two men worked together. One of Zicarelli's henchmen fell into the hands of the law and was sentenced to a total of one hundred and seventy-four years in prison. In return for a promise of clemency (such bargaining is common practice in the USA), he agreed to do some talking. Gallagher figured in several of his stories. Once, the hoodlum said, the Congressman had telephoned him in the middle of the night and summoned him to his house. Gallagher had led him down into the cellar and shown him the corpse of an underworld associate; he was to remove the body and dispose of it secretly. The man was too experienced, however, to do this unless told to by his boss. Gallagher then put him through to Zicarelli, who confirmed the order. This story was later borne out by a police investigation.

It would be possible to continue at some length this account of how Gallagher and Zicarelli, the Congressman and the gangster, worked hand and glove, but only two further details will be given. First, neither of them went to jail. And second, when talk started in Congress about the need to step up the battle against organized crime, it was none other than Gallagher who led the bitter fight to kill the proposed measures. This would be strange behavior for a servant of the people, of course, but not at all for a servant of the Cosa Nostra.

Parapolitics, a magazine published in California, writes that every administration that has occupied the White House in the past fifty years had connections with organized crime. This was particularly true of the Truman and Nixon administrations, but it seems that the Reagan administration has decided to outdo them. The magazine names the following Reagan people as having links to the Mafia: William Casey (Director of the CIA), Max Hugel (former Deputy Director of the CIA), Raymond Donovan (Secretary of Labor), and Maxwell Rabb (Ambassador to Italy).

When Maxwell Rabb, one of the most active figures in the Reagan campaign organization, was rewarded with an ambassadorship, his sudden rise naturally attracted widespread attention. It was soon discovered that he had close business ties with the Mafia. There had been shady dealings with Meyer Lansky, a notorious Cosa Nostra leader who had managed to hold on to his position for several decades. Rabb, it seems, was once director of Seven Arts Productions, which operates in conjunction with the Mafia. In particular, Lansky had used Rabb's firm to set up a gambling operation in the Bahamas.

Secretary of Labor Raymond Donovan, one of Reagan's closest associates, was vice president of the Schiavone Construction Company before joining the administration. In that post he had dealings with the Mafia. In early 1981, when the Reagan cabinet was still taking shape, the FBI told the White House in a confidential memorandum that it had learned of close personal and business ties between Donovan and well-known Mafia figures. Solid evidence exists that Reagan and his chief advisers knew about Donovan's questionable past, but he was given the appointment nonetheless, and the FBI's findings were concealed from Congress. Obviously modern American morality no longer regards ties to the Mafia as blameworthy.

Later, when Donovan's unsavory background came to light, New York District Special Prosecutor Leon Silverman was appointed to investigate the case. He found two FBI reports containing informers' testimony about Donovan's underworld associations, and five other prejudicial documents. *Time* wrote that "if the committee members had been given all that information at the time, it seems doubtful that Donovan would have been confirmed for his post."

It became known that Donovan was a friend of a New Jersey gangster. Among his other underworld connections was Cosa Nostra boss William Masselli. Washington officials, including Reagan himself, tried to deny these facts, but the course of the investigation and the surrounding events clearly showed the familiar signature of the Mafia.

Silverman's investigators repeatedly questioned Fred Furino, a Mafia bagman. They must have been on the right track, because he soon disappeared. Later his half rotted corpse was found in the trunk of a car. He had been killed in typical gangland fashion, with a bullet through the head. There is evidence that he received money from Donovan.

Nat Masselli, son of the Cosa Nostra boss mentioned above,

suffered a similar fate. He too was questioned in connection with the Donovan case and then shot through the head. Neither man's killers were ever traced. Two key witnesses had been removed. What need could there have been for these murders if the Donovan case had nothing to it? The chief detective working on it received an anonymous telephone call: "If you don't lay off the Donovan investigation, you and your wife and your children will end up in a pine box." Senator Orrin Hatch, chairman of the investigating committee, was similarly threatened.

This was not the end of the matter, however. The scandal spread, and soon it was not only the gangsters who were concerned. The White House itself entered the fray on the side of Donovan and the Schiavone Construction Company, where he had worked before his appointment and had dealings with the Cosa Nostra. The help the White House provided was of a very special kind: it sent experts who began a smear campaign against everyone officially involved with the investigation. A certain Robert Shortley, a former FBI agent, was placed in charge of this peculiar operation — its organizers well knew where to turn for the sort of man they wanted. Shortley also happens to be an old friend of Edward Hickey, a high White House official and colleague of Edwin Meese, one of Reagan's closest counsellors. Shortley's wife works on the White House staff too, and one of the President's speechwriters, Anthony Dolan, is his son-in-law.

Frank Sinatra, the famous American singer and movie actor, is well known to be one of Reagan's intimate friends. Sinatra is also a successful businessman and a multimillionaire. It has long been rumored that he has close ties to ranking figures in the Cosa Nostra. *The Godfather*, an American film about a gangland syndicate, has a subplot in which Mafia bosses help an unknown young singer to become a big star. They do this through their usual unscrupulous methods, intimidation and bribery. The singer is their friend and favorite. The film's makers must have studied their subject carefully. After its release a certain Aladena (Jimmy) Fratianno, a Cosa Nostra hit man, agreed to cooperate with the FBI in order to save his own skin. Among the materials he handed over to the authorities was a photo album containing a picture of Sinatra standing arm in arm with Mafia bosses. The best friend of the President of the United States! Sinatra collected twenty million dollars for the Reagan campaign. He is often master of ceremonies at White House festivities; it was he who presided

over Reagan's inaugural ball. Here is what Reagan has to say about his friend's ties with the underworld: "We've heard those things about Frank for years, and we just hope none of them are true." Still, the friendship has not left Reagan untarnished. The White House is often jokingly referred to as "Cosa Nostra headquarters" in the United States.

Meyer Lansky was one of the most colorful figures in the history of the Cosa Nostra. His career spans half a century. He was an outstanding specimen of the versatile modern gangster, the man who maintained the syndicate's contacts with legitimate business and politics. The *Wall Street Journal* called him a financial genius of the underworld.

His police dossier characterized him as a ruthless cutthroat, and the Justice Department dubbed him overlord of the USA's criminal world. For half a century the bosses and supreme bosses of the Cosa Nostra came and went, but Meyer Lansky remained. He was what might be called the syndicate's head bookkeeper. In the USA money is everything — and that goes for the Cosa Nostra too!

Lansky's personal fortune is estimated at $ 300 million— such were the financial heights attained by Little Meyer, who in his youth, together with Benjamin (Bugsy) Siegel, had headed the Jewish gangs. The two later made an alliance with Cosa Nostra leaders Lucky Luciano and Frank Costello. It was then that "Murder Incorporated" was established; Lansky sat on its board of directors. An account of his criminal career would occupy several pages, but only one episode will be described here: Lansky's romance with the Israeli leadership. Why should the Cosa Nostra, an all-American organization, be left out of the political partnership between Washington and Tel Aviv?

Meyer Lansky was already past seventy when he set off for Israel. He lived there for more than a year, in a luxurious villa that once belonged to Minister of Transportation Shimon Peres, where he was often visited by leaders of the Cosa Nostra. Even the Israeli papers reported that Lansky and his colleagues were pumping large sums of money into the country. There is also another side to this surprising but quite natural alliance. The West German magazine *Der Spiegel* wrote that Israel was encouraging the USA's Jewish Mafia to settle within its borders, intending to use it in the fight against the Arabs.

The heads of the Cosa Nostra are willing to be "used" in this way. It has already been noted that as a group they are

reactionary, politically conservative and chauvinistic. When Lansky returned to New York from Israel, he told the reporters that turned out to meet him that as a patriotic American he had timed his arrival to coincide with Election Day so he could cast his vote in the presidential race. He is known to be a big contributer to various Zionist organizations. It is also known that during the USA's aggressive war in Vietnam Lansky demanded that Hanoi be bombed to the ground.

Stepping boldy into American and Israeli politics, Lansky and his colleagues gravitated quite naturally to the extreme reactionaries. It is no secret, for instance, that they work closely with a fascist-style American organization led by Rabbi Meir Kahane, the so-called Jewish Defense League (JDL). This fact has been reported, for example, by the Israeli newspaper *Yediot Achronot*, which cited a "high-ranking member of the New York police department" as its source. Meir Kahane's group is responsible for many acts of banditry committed in the USA against the citizens and official agencies of the USSR and other countries. There is nothing to which the JDL will not stoop; one of its leaders has said that anything that runs counter to détente with the Soviet Union is good. The Zionist terrorists of the JDL have fired rifles at UN headquarters in New York, and set off a bomb in the office of Sol Hurok, the impresario who did so much to promote cultural contacts between the USA and the USSR. The Italian newspaper *La Stampa* characterizing Kahane's group calls it an extremist organization, whose methods are very much like guerilla warfare under urban conditions: tailing Soviet citizens in the United States, noisy demonstrations at the Soviet Embassy and Consulate. Its members learn to use weapons and explosives. They also study karate.

The JDL's activities answer this description very well. Once Meir Kahane was jailed briefly on a charge of purchasing and possessing a large quantity of explosives. On his release the rabbi was solemnly received by his confederate, friend, and mentor, Joseph Colombo.

It was quite understandable that gangster boss Colombo should be drawn to politics. We have already seen that gangs can buy and make politicians. There are plenty of gangster businessmen, so why shouldn't the Cosa Nostra have its own gangster politicians? Such were the thoughts that moved Colombo.

Joseph Colombo came from a family of gangsters. His father, Anthony Colombo, was a prominent figure in the Cosa Nostra, and died a gangster's death, strangled in his

own limousine. Joseph followed in his footsteps, starting off as a hired killer in the New York family of Joseph Profaci. In time the new recruit matured into a veteran with dozens of murders on his hands, seasoned in the bloodlettings of several gangland wars in which hoodlums killed hoodlums and endlessly doublecrossed one another in the struggle for power. Colombo was smart and lucky. He never suffered seriously at the hands of his colleagues or of American justice. Twice he was fined for gambling, and once he spent thirty days in jail for refusing to testify about the Cosa Nostra's expansion into legitimate business. But that was all. Once he had achieved high standing in the syndicate, he began to live the way a big boss should. He had a New York townhouse and a country estate with tennis courts and a private riding track. His diversified legal business holdings included a florist's shop and a funeral parlor. And now he had decided to move on from business into politics.

There was no delay in carrying out the decision; a man with Colombo's money could do almost anything he wanted. So he founded the League for the Protection of the Civil Rights of Americans of Italian Descent. How are we to understand this metamorphosis, through which a gangster who had become a businessman went on to turn into a politician? There are several million Americans of Italian descent, and many of them have a hard time of it. A clever and enterprising gangster, capitalizing on his own Italian descent, could surely benefit from this situation. And why shouldn't Colombo, who looked every bit the businessman and decent American citizen, help out his brothers and sisters? There was only the small fact that he was, after all, a gangster. Ah, but that would have to be proved! The law, for instance, had nothing to say against him. The League was accordingly created, and the gang's political machine went into operation.

Oddly enough, though, the other chiefs of the Cosa Nostra were not pleased. Probably they were old fashioned; they thought the gang's line was crime *and* business, but not politics. They didn't want the publicity that politics always brings. In a word, the reigning "boss of bosses," Carlo Gambino, was angered. The blow took Colombo utterly by surprise.

It fell on the very day that Colombo's League was triumphantly celebrating its second birthday. Thousands of New Yorkers turned out for the event. At the center of the speaker's platform sat Colombo himself, beaming. But the glad day ended in tragedy. Shots rang out from the crowd of reporters milling

around the speaker's platform, and Colombo toppled, blood gushing from his wounds. Then came another burst of gunfire; this time it was the assassin who crumpled to the ground. A typical gangland killing! The hired executioner had been eliminated immediately, and the sniper who had picked him off vanished, as always, without a trace.

Colombo had been gravely wounded, and was left paralyzed. The attempt on his life set off another gangland war.

Up to now we have been speaking of the political connections of organized crime. Now we are ready to take up a subject that is far more alarming.

Back in its cradle, in Sicily and Italy, the Mafia had political influence at the very highest level. When Vito Genovese decided to emigrate to the United States, Mussolini himself provided assistance in obtaining a passport. It was this same Vito Genovese who began the collaboration between the Cosa Nostra and the American government. Before American troops invaded Sicily in 1943, he had offered the support of the Mafia, and offer was accepted. Genovese himself landed on the island, wearing American uniform. Other gangland bosses were also working with the Americans, and as a result three links were solidly forged together: the American secret service, the American underworld, and the Sicilian Mafia. This fact should be noted carefully. It will explain much in what follows.

It was at this time that the American secret service came into close contact with the leadership of the Cosa Nostra. Lucky Luciano also took part, together with Genovese, in the joint landing in Sicily by American troops and American gangsters. Luciano had left Sicily for the USA, and there risen to leading rank in the syndicate; in 1943 he returned to his motherland. It is noteworthy that a short time before he had been arrested in the USA and sentenced to a total of fifty years in prison. After he had agreed to cooperate with the American secret service, he was granted an amnesty by Washington.

It was not, of course, with any thought of the struggle to throw off fascism that the heads of the Cosa Nostra entered into collaboration with the American authorities during World War II. They were simply making skillful use of the existing situation. Shortly after landing in Sicily Genovese was arrested; his people had begun to steal American property. True, he was released immediately. The Americans were quite pleased with their gangster partners, and placed the administration of many towns and villages in their hands.

The ties between the Cosa Nostra and the American secret service proved lasting. This ill-boding alliance was recently thrust into the limelight by a scandal over CIA operation. A special Senate committee investigating the activities of intelligence gathering agencies discovered, for example, that the CIA had tried to organize at least eight attempts on the life of Fidel Castro.

It is now understood that the CIA attempted to realize these designs with the help of the Cosa Nostra, which had its own scores to settle with the new Cuba. Back in the mid-30s the gangsters had made Cuba their very own support base. Emissaries of the Cosa Nostra had taken control of the gambling business and the narcotics trade. In the 50s the syndicate achieved a monopoly over Havana's casinos and claimed for its own the principal and most reliable route for smuggling drugs from Western Europe into the USA. The gangsters were so taken with the island that many of them settled there. And then, in 1959, it all came crashing down around them. A revolution swept away the corrupt regime, and with it the Cosa Nostra's operations in Cuba. Imagine the rage of the gangsters, so unexpectedly deprived of this source of multimillion-dollar profits!

Meyer Lansky was one of the bosses with a grievance against the Cuban revolution. He had lived in Cuba and been a friend of the dictator Batista, with whom he fled from Havana. Batista is known to have enjoyed generous financial support from the Cosa Nostra, and in return the organization's heads were allowed to do as they liked on the island. On returning to the USA, Lansky declared at a meeting of syndicate leaders that he would give one million dollars for Castro's head.

Another leader who had lost much in Cuba was the head of the Cosa Nostra's Chicago branch, Sam Giancana. He had particularly distinguished himself, incidentally, by his success in establishing ties with politicians. His son-in-law was an official assistant to Congressman Roland Libonati, who sat on the House Judiciary Committee. Giancana was also on good terms with the CIA. It has now been established that in the early 60s the agency asked him to assassinate Fidel Castro. He worked out a plan, but it was never carried out. All this came to light when the investigation of the CIA's activities began. Giancana had passed sixty-six by then, and was living quietly in his house in the Chicago suburbs. He was called to give testimony. The case was top secret, and Giancana's house was carefully watched by both his personal bodyguards and agents of the FBI. Nonetheless someone managed to put six bullets into the

ageing gangster's brain. Who? The Cosa Nostra? The CIA? Or both of them, working together? After Giancana's death his closest associates were also murdered.

There is another ghastly crime in which the FBI and organized crime were involved together: the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the outstanding black civil-rights leader, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. As in the case of the assassination of President Kennedy, the investigation quickly "established" that Dr. King had been killed by one man acting alone, not as the result of a conspiracy. And as in the case of the Kennedy assassination, the investigators judged wrongly, to say the least.

In 1978 a record of a conversation with Russell Bayers, a resident of St. Louis, was found in an FBI archive in that city. The conversation took place shortly after King's death. It should be said that the transcript was a copy, and had survived by chance. Someone had long since destroyed the original; and no mention was made of Bayers's testimony during the investigation into King's murder.

Bayer said he had been approached in 1967 by two prosperous businessmen who told him that a "group of business people" was willing to pay $ 50,000 to anyone who would do away with King. The men had come to Bayers because a relation of his had worked as a hired killer and naturally had extensive connections in the underworld. At the time, though, he was serving a life sentence for murder, but this proved no barrier to the conspirators. No sooner had they got in touch with that man than he was released on parole, unguarded. Thus he was free to meet with the conspirators. At the same time, he was still officially in prison, and so could hardly be suspected after King's assassination. What was more, he himself was not to do the killing; it was only his professional advice that was wanted. The cunning plan that was worked out shows the same handwriting as the assassination of President Kennedy.

James Earl Ray, a petty criminal, was serving a sentence in the same prison. After the start of talks with the businessmen, Ray escaped under mysterious circumstances. A few months later King was shot, and Ray was arrested and charged with his murder. Bayers was frightened and told everything he knew to the local office of the FBI. His testimony was suppressed, however, and it was only in 1978, when a copy of the transcript turned up by chance, that Bayers was called before a Congressional committee investigating political killings. After receiving

promises that he would not be held legally responsible, he repeated his previous testimony.

At present the assassination of Dr. King is even more shrouded in mystery than that of President Kennedy, but it is already clear that James Earl Ray played the same role in it as Lee Harvey Oswald did in Kennedy's murder; that is, he was supposed to lead the investigators off on a false scent. Ray denied his guilt, just as Oswald had. The hand of the Cosa Nostra and the hand of the CIA are visible in both murders. Here then is a truly sinister symbiosis.

What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. If politicians, the CIA, and the FBI are not above dealing with the Cosa Nostra, it could only be expected that the police would have their connections too, although at first it might seem they should be the ones to go after the criminals. So it might seem, but a Justice Department official has said that if you picked a place in the USA by closing your eyes and sticking a pin into a map, and then conducted an investigation there, you would find that police were in league with organized crime.

American police forces are equipped with the latest word in technology. I had noticed this many times before, and I had the chance to learn more about this side of the work done by the guardians of law and order at the headquarters of the New York police department. I was shown around by Jack Collins, a police press officer, who proudly demonstrated the various electronic gadgets that filled the building. The weapons and technical resources the police have are truly impressive. And yet, as we know, the crime rate in the USA continues to grow, and organized crime not only grows but flourishes.

At the New York police headquarters I saw the front parlor, so to speak, of police work. There is also a back door. Each year, the Cosa Nostra contributes four and a half billion dollars to the American police — that is the amount it spends on out-and-out bribes. Policemen may receive regular payments from gangsters (like a supplementary salary), or lump sums as occasion dictates. The career of a New York policeman, William Phillips, may serve as an example of how this is done. Phillips served on the New York police force for fourteen years, and then was suddenly discovered to be taking bribes from gangsters. He was to be put on trial, but then the heads of the city's police force, concerned about widespread corruption, proposed a deal: if Phillips helped them catch others on the take, he himself would not have to face charges. He agreed.

He explained that as soon as a man puts on a police uniform

a world of temptations opens before him. In Phillips's very first weeks on the job, his more experienced colleagues had shown him what was what: where a policeman could eat and drink for free, how to deal with minor infractions on the spot, collecting fees from the offenders, and so on. He was also told that all of his booty must be shared with his immediate superior. Phillips proved an able pupil. He was well thought of, and in three years was promoted to police detective. In his new job he wore not a uniform but a regular suit. He was supposed to be keeping an eye on the gaming houses, and so he made the acquaintance of organized crime almost right away. He was on duty, sitting in his unmarked car, when a man approached him. "Are you the new guy here?" he asked. "Yes, that's right", the newly fledged detective answered. "Then we'll pay you twenty dollars a day. OK? That's what the last man was getting." How simply and how neatly it was all arranged!

Phillips soon found his bearings in the gambling business. It was not difficult. He testified that all sixteen members of his squadron were receiving regular salaries from gangsters, with sizable additional payments from time to time. Phillips was in clover: he gambled on the horses, acquired a mistress, and rented an apartment for her. He said that members of the narcotics squads got even bigger money from the gangsters; he had once seen three detectives dividing among them a bribe of $ 80,000 received from gangsters who specialized in narcotics traffic.

With Phillips's help, several dozen policemen were caught in collusion with criminals. Another uniformed bribe-taker, from the Eightieth Precinct, testified that only two of the seventy policemen there did not accept bribes. It was learned that the lawmen were getting several thousand dollars a month from every gaming house. In just one area of New York, thirty-seven policemen on the beat were each receiving a "supplementary" salary of more than a thousand dollars a month.

Even more shocking facts about police corruption in America could be cited. A jewelry store was robbed in New Orleans; it turned out to have been the work of the local police. They gained access to the building through the roof, evidently being aware that the doors and windows were equipped with an electronic alarm system. They forced their way in unhurriedly while covered from the air by a police helicopter, which was ready to warn them of any danger by two-way radio. In Denver, capital of the state of Colorado, it was a long time before policemen who were robbing the safes of local businessmen were caught. In Chicago police killed six drug dealers who were interfering

with their own narcotics ring. The victims were shot and thrown into the water with weights tied to their bodies. When rumors of the deed began to circulate around the city, a police sergeant disappeared. Soon the rumors died down. The corpses were retrieved only much later, and the murderers were never found. A typical gangland ending!

The Poisoners

The most profitable of the Cosa Nostra's criminal enterprises is the narcotics trade. It is easy to see why: *Time* magazine says that forty-two million people in the USA smoke marijuana, and two million use cocaine. A pound of marijuana sells for $ 600 in the USA; the Columbian peasant who grows it is paid $ 6 for the same amount. A pound of cocaine sells for $ 7,000 in the USA. *Time* says that Americans smoke $ 25 billion worth of marijuana each year, and spend $ 20 billion on cocaine. No wonder, then, that drug addiction is one of the worst ills plaguing American society. It is in fact a national calamity.

This side of the Cosa Nostra's business is thoroughly international. It is organized in the grand style, in keeping with all the rules of gangland operations. One of the syndicate's main bases is Columbia, the world's largest marijuana producer. Bogotá is firmly bound by invisible threads to the gangster centers of New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles. The specialists in the narcotics trade have at their disposal dozens, if not hundreds, of airplanes and vessels, pilots and seamen, radio operators, dockers, hired killers, drug dealers, and so on. They have hundreds of secret landing strips on Columbia's Guajara Peninsula, where marijuana is grown. Narcotics are also smuggled into the USA by sea. The Columbia coastline, with its many bays and inlets, offering havens for drug-runners, is over two thousand kilometers long. The crop produced by Guajara's 100,000 hectares of marijuana plantations is huge, and the scale of the transport operations is similarly impressive.

If marijuana is the national product of Columbia, so to speak, cocaine comes mostly from the neighboring countries of Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador, where the coca leaves are grown. Columbia, with its laboratories for producing cocaine from the leaves, plays the role of an intermediary. The gangsters bring the finished product into the USA by plane and by boat. They hide the powder cunningly in various sorts of cargo, or even dissolve it in alcoholic beverages and perfumes (upon delivery, the cocaine is easily recovered from the solution). The "goods" enter the USA mainly through Florida, where according to the *Reader's Digest* there are two hundred and sixty airports and landing strips used for smuggling. The state also has almost two thousand kilometers of coastline. Even the American press admits that the authorities are powerless to combat the drug traffic.

The Cosa Nostra, which derives immense profits from these operations, is not reluctant to spend money on the latest electronic devices for its vehicles. The gangsters' boats have special night-vision equipment, and their planes are electronically alerted to radio monitors on the ground.

Here is an incident from the history of the struggle between the authorities and the smugglers. A patrol boat detected a suspicious yacht coming into American territorial waters and gave chase. Soon two airplanes appeared. They strafed the patrol boat with machine guns and bombarded it with grenades. The patrol boat sank. The yacht escaped.

Bribery and murder are the main business methods of the drug trade. In Ríohacha, Columbia, ninety-two persons were murdered in just two months. In Barranguilla, another Columbian city, hired killers claimed seventy victims in one year. The gangsters will stop at nothing to continue receiving their truly fantastic profits. They have not only money, technology, and weapons in their hands, but also the law. They hire the best lawyers, who specialize in getting even the most flagrant underworld drug smugglers off scot-free. Oddly enough, the law itself, and not only the lawmen, abets the illegal operations. Legislation in this particular area is remarkably complex and out of date. A patrol boat, for instance, has the right to stop and search suspicious vessels only within the twelve-mile limit. Beyond that distance, transportation of drugs is not considered a criminal act.

An atmosphere of surprising impunity surrounds the gangsters who run the drug traffic. *U.S. News and World Report* titled an article about a part of Mexico bordering on the United States "Where Drug Smuggling Is a Way of Life." A local businessman told the magazine's reporter: "We love for the drug people to come in and spread their money around.... We don't ask where it came from." Another local resident, a lawyer, continued this line of thought: "Narcotics are the mainstay of many law firms in the valley. They've all got money, and they pay you in cash." One lawyer whose clients are mostly drug dealers and smugglers said: "This is their country. They know it and every-

body down there." Yet another local resident told the reporter: "This is a world apart — it's a closed corporation.... That's why an undercover agent wouldn't have a chance. He'd be spotted right away."

The countries of Latin America are far from being the Cosa Nostra's only source of drugs. Another center of the syndicate's far-reaching trade is Southeast Asia, or more precisely Indochina. According to the UN, this area produces seventy percent of the world's raw opium. The opium poppies grow on inaccessible mountain slopes. It is believed that more than half of all illicitly used opium comes from these plantations. The raw opium is made into heroin in secret laboratories, and then smuggled into Europe and the USA. How could the bosses of the Cosa Nostra pass up such a market? At one time they entered into direct contacts with it: it is known that Santo Trafficante, a Florida gangland boss, made a special tour of the countries of Southeast Asia and organized the purchase of heroin and opium by agents of the syndicate. It is significant that Trafficante quickly found a common language with the Saigon regime, which was then still being propped up with American bayonets and which had monopolized the narcotics trade.

The Cosa Nostra, by its very existence, poisons the social climate of the USA. And it poisons Americans with drugs. But this is not the end of it. American medical men compare obsessive gambling to drug addiction and alcoholism. It is estimated that fifty million Americans gamble; they lose $ 100 billion each year. Of this fifty million, six million are believed to be hopelessly ill, the same way that inveterate drug addicts are, for example. Here is a list of just a few of the temptations they face: betting on races, baseball, and other sports, shooting galleries, cards, slot machines, lotteries, and roulette. An American doctor, who has studied obsessive gamblers, believes that they are indeed suffering from a disease.

If Americans waste $ 100 billion a year on gambling, the Cosa Nostra could hardly be expected to ignore such an opportunity. The syndicate has long since established a highly effective gambling industry that brings in massive profits. Thousands of legal and underground establishments throughout the country cater to every sort of gambler. Gambling is also attractive to the syndicate because its centers are usually resorts or thickly settled urban areas. The leaders of the gambling industry can use their profits to take over the hotels, clubs, and other legal businesses in which they operate, or to buy them together with their legal owners, who become mere puppets of the gangsters.

Gangsters and Advertising

Gossip columns, made up of facts, fictions, rumors, and speculation about the lives of people who interest the man in the street, are vastly popular in the USA. The names of Cosa Nostra bosses also figure in these widely read productions — which is a significant fact in itself. The main thing, though, is that outright bandits are treated in the same way as other popular "idols" by the columnists, accorded the same sort of adulation.

This attitude goes back a long time. One of the exhibits in the American pavilion at the World's Fair held in Chicago before the outbreak of World War II was the bullet-riddled car of an ambushed gangster. Portraits of notorious Cosa Nostra figures from years past decorate the walls of many bars and restaurants. Places where gangsters from different "families" fought bloody battles, or where gang leaders were brought down by the bullets of their rivals, are sites of national interest in the USA. The gangster is a hero not only of the press, but also of books, films, and television shows. What is more, underworld figures are often shown in a rather positive light.

What would a book called *Honor Thy Father* be about? Gangsters, of course! It tells of the varied and violent life of Joseph Bonnano, who started as an ordinary hit man and rose to leadership of one of the New York "families." The book gives a detailed account of Bonnano's connections in high places, and particularly of his friendship and business dealings with Haitian dictator Doc Duvalier. The author (Gay Talese) also tells about the gangster's son, who graduated from the University of Arizona and then went on to business school. He moved in high society circles, but was nonetheless, like his father, an active member of the Cosa Nostra. He married the daughter of Joseph Profaci, another notorious gangland boss.

There is an interesting story behind the book. Talese met Bonnano's son, became friendly with him, and thus gained entrée into the gang's inner circle and made the acquaintance of the boss himself. It is obvious that if anything in the book were not to Bonnano's liking he could easily have prevented its publication. This leads one to wonder whether the book is an objective account of the Cosa Nostra or an advertisement for it.

All sides of gangland life and activities have been depicted by many authors, some of whom take a very peculiar viewpoint. Here is an idyllic picture of how the wives of Cosa Nostra bosses live, painted by the author of an unsigned article in *Time*. They pass their days quietly, in posh apartments located in fashionable neighborhoods. They like to settle in vacation spots — Florida, for example. Although they could afford virtually anything, they live modestly, keeping in the background, watched over by vigilant bodyguards. They seldom see their husbands, who are off on business, or enjoying themselves with their mistresses, or (on occasion) serving short sentences in jail. Their wives do not know the details, and are not much interested. Most of the women these days are native-born Americans, but they have had an old-fashioned upbringing and regard obedience to their husbands as natural. Some of the Cosa Nostra's members come from families of gangsters, but quite a few of gangsters' sons go straight into legitimate business, or to universities. None of them, the magazine stresses, will ever be a manual laborer. Many of the gangsters' daughters graduate from college, but as a rule they do not pursue careers afterwards. For them it is housekeeping and motherhood. It is interesting to note that gang members do not encourage friendships among their wives, who meet mostly in church, at weddings, and at funerals; other areas of social life are off limits to them. The wives of the gangsters are not brassy, *Time* says, not arrogant. They are devoted mothers and grandmothers, ladies of the old school. Almost all of them do their own cooking and cleaning.

Here are few remarks that these gangster madonnas made to the reporter who described their way of life.

"We live a quiet life. It is not our intention to be noticed.... I'm happiest sometimes when they leave my name off the list of charity contributors."

"I'm so sick of the Italian image of the uneducated housewife. The women I know give their time to charities and hospitals. They don't get in the papers. They don't do it for that."

"Life is nothing.... Life is a vaporous smoke.... We were married 37 years. Before you know it, it's goodbye." (This from the widow of a gangster killed in a shooting.)

One of the most famous novels about gangland life is Mario Puzo's *The Godfather*, which has sold some eleven million copies. This book is also known to have had the blessing of the bosses. As is usual in the USA, the bestseller was eventually made into a film, which was also a great hit. Violence and cruelty are the main themes of both the book and the movie, but unfortunately neither could be called an exposé. The opposite would be closer to the truth: despite the vast amounts of shooting and bloodshed, they surround the underworld with a certain aura of romance. In this they are like most other American books and films about organized crime. The heroes are not just gangsters, or gangster businessmen, but rugged individualists. They live in colorful, patriarchal families, their wives are upright and pious, and so forth. Above all, there is no condemnation of gangsterism, the social scourge that afflicts the USA. In fact, the reader or viewer is clearly shown that the evil is ineradicable, that it is senseless to resist.

Thus it seems that such depictions of the Cosa Nostra are in effect a sort of advertising, something that no undertaking in the USA can do without. There is no doubt that this advertising helps create the climate in which the syndicate prospers. Here is what *Time* has to say on the subject: "Above all, there must be an end to Americans' tolerance for any kind of organized crime. Romantic notions about the dons and winking acceptance of their goods and services create an atmosphere that helps the Mob to flourish."

That much is true. The Cosa Nostra continues to flourish. And not just for the reason *Time* gives. What follows is an account of a very typical Mafia crime, an example that shows how the criminal machine really works.

An Example

This story began long ago, although it has become public knowledge only recently. Even today much of it is still unclear, and it is doubtful that the whole truth will ever be known.

The action is set in Phoenix, capital of the state of Arizona. Donald Bolles (known to everyone as Don) was a reporter for the *Arizona Republic*, a local newspaper. He squeezed his big frame into his compact Datsun, which was parked outside the Clarendon Motel, and turned the ignition switch. The car pulled away from the curb — and went flying into the air. There was a deafening explosion. Some of the motel's window panes were broken.

The people who rushed to the scene found Don Bolles, covered with blood, lying face down on the asphalt, his legs crushed under what was left of the Datsun. He was still alive! "Telep-

hone my wife!..." he gasped. "They finally got me! The Mafia... Emprise... Find John Adamson!"

Certainly his killers never expected that he would manage to say that much. They had put more than enough dynamite under the car. But Don Bolles went on fighting for his life for quite some time, considering what had happened to him.

The surgeons worked on him for more than five hours. They amputated his right leg, and removed dozens of scraps of metal from his body. His condition remained critical. Meanwhile the detectives were examining the wreckage of his Datsun. It was not hard to see that a bomb had been planted right under the driver's seat. The police also established that the car had moved several yards before the explosion.

With the help of Bolles's colleagues at the *Arizona Republic* the detectives also began to check into what he had been working on lately, who might have been worried about what he was finding out. It seemed that Bolles was a restless sort and a reporter of some daring. He specialized in unmasking the activities of organized crime, and also corruption in the upper echelons of local business and politics. Over the years he had received quite a few anonymous warnings and threats on his life.

Together Bolles's colleagues and the detectives went through his most recent articles and his notebooks. They discovered that he had been making inquiries about the Emprise Corporation, which had dealings in Arizona. Its headquarters were in Buffalo, New York. Bolles had been convinced that it was one of the Cosa Nostra's numerous front organizations.

Bolles's attention had first been drawn by the Emprise Corporation's interest in gambling, one of the Cosa Nostra's traditional and best loved fields of endeavor. The firm was trying to take control of horse and dog tracks in the state. Bolles connected the inroads that Emprise had been making with the appearance in Arizona of prominent underworld figures from all over the country. He also drew the quite logical connection between the influx of top gangsters and Arizona's booming real-estate business.

In 1950, Phoenix had 106,000 residents. The number had now grown to 1.2 million. This rapid growth was due to Arizona's having been one of last territories incorporated in the USA. It became a state only in 1912. Arizona is mostly desert, with a scattering of lovely oases. There are silver and copper mines. Cattle ranching is widely developed. Because the area had been settled comparatively late, there was still a great deal of vacant

land, and speculation in real estate flourished. There were sales and re-sales, all in the traditional American pattern of settling new lands.

People in Arizona, probably more than anywhere else in the USA, are used to interpreting the laws as they see fit. A few families of ranchers and traders are in control. Firearms are held in high esteem. In a word, the prevailing atmosphere in the Sun Belt is one that is quite familiar from the history of the American West.

This peculiar public climate has done more than bring sudden riches to local politicians and businessmen. It has also attracted many members of the underworld to Arizona. There are one hundred and seventy known gangsters living in Phoenix and Tucson alone. They are engaged in a variety of criminal activities, but their main interest is in drug smuggling: Arizona is a transshipment point for bringing marijuana and heroin into the USA from Mexico.

But let us return to Bolles. It was learned during the investigation that several days before the attempt on his life he had received a phone call from a man who said he had information on the extent to which Senator Barry Goldwater and Harry Rosenzweig (a prominent local Republican and intimate friend of Goldwater's) were involved in land speculation. The anonymous *agent provocateur* had laid the right bait. Bolles had been interested in the two men for some time, and the telephone conversation convinced him that his caller really did know something about them and other notables in the political world.

Bolles told his closest associates at the newspaper about the call, and about the appointment he had made to meet the stranger. Soon after the attempt on his life, they found a note Bolles had made: "John Adamson... Lobby at 11:15... Clarendon House...."

The following day, Bolles was still alive and had regained consciousness. He told a police detective that he had indeed gone to meet a man who called himself John Adamson at the Clarendon House on June 2. Bolles also said that he had met Adamson once before. He was to have received certain important information from him at the June 2 meeting. He identified Adamson from a photograph the detective showed him.

Adamson was known to the police as an unsavory associate of Ned Warren, a big land speculator. A search for Adamson was begun. Soon he himself appeared at the police station in the company of his lawyer. An attempt was made to question Adamson, but his lawyer said that his client was not yet ready. Adam-

son was then released on $ 100 bail. Bolles's colleagues at the newspaper took it upon themselves to keep an eye on him.

Meanwhile Bolles was still in agony. His severe wounds made it necessary to amputate his other leg, and then an arm. It was not until ten days after the explosion that he died. He was forty-seven years old. That same day John Adamson was arrested and charged with murder.

The martyr's death Bolles had died stirred the entire state and found its way into the national press as well. Senator Goldwater himself felt called upon to comment. "I've known Don as long as he has been here," he said. "He was a very fine man, a decent man. It's all right if those things happen to an SOB, but not to a guy like this. We have had several things like this happen out here, but we've sort of laughed it off, well, it happened here but it was an accident. There's always been the feeling that Arizona was a sort of a place of peace, but we can't feel that way now."

Many people were commenting on the murder of the Phoenix reporter. His colleagues set up a special investigating group, headed by Robert Greene, a Pulitzer Prize winner. Greene said: "Bolles was killed because of what he was doing, and what he was doing (investigating crime and corruption) we more or less universally accept as right."

After Bolles's murder it was recalled in the press that there had already been a good number of similar killings in Arizona. The victims were all people who might in one way or another have exposed organized crime and its connections with politics and business. Not one of the murders had been solved.

For some incomprehensible reason, the bomb placed in Bolles's car had let the gangsters down. How could he have survived, have lived to tell detectives what he knew, after such a powerful explosion? The gangsters and the people behind them thought that he would be out of the way before their struggle with the police and the law began. But even the mishap that befell them did only a little to make the investigation and trial easier.

The investigation showed that Adamson was a typical cheap hoodlum, a criminal who hobnobbed with the big bosses of the criminal world. He had no visible means of support, but lacked no comfort in life. At the outset he behaved impudently. He did not know that the police had already made contact with his mistress and with one of his friends who was also involved in the killing. Both were ready to testify against him in return for promises of immunity.

Adamson was visibly shaken when his girlfriend, Gail Owens, took the witness stand. She testified that once, when she was out for a jaunt with Adamson, he had gone into a hobby shop and come out with a box. Back at their hotel she became curious about what the box contained. She opened it and saw a radio control device of the kind often used to guide model airplanes. Later Adamson had asked her if she knew Don Bolles, and she said she did. She also testified that "Adamson bragged that he had a job in which he could earn 'a lot of money.' On the day of the bombing he called me and said 'something's happened and I won't see you for a while.'"

The next witness was one Robert Lettiere, a man with a criminal record. After protracted bargaining with the judge to ensure that he himself would not be charged in the case, Lettiere testified that Adamson had told him he had planted the bomb under the reporter's car.

The hearings alarmed the political and business leaders of Arizona, who began to interfere with justice high-handedly and effectively. County Attorney Moise Berger was accused of conducting the case improperly. The charge came from an all-powerful group of Arizona businessmen who called themselves the Phoenix Forty. The consternation of the Arizona bigwigs is readily understandable; the investigation was linking more and more men like themselves to organized crime.

Berger said that he was unable to prosecute the Bolles case properly because of active interference both from the official authorities and from a powerful coalition of parties involved. He resigned in protest. Thus a prosecuting attorney who had already successfully begun a second four-year term of office was removed from the scene.

Berger's place was taken by Deputy County Attorney Donald Harris, who was to serve out the balance of the four-year term. It was not expected that he would exert himself in continuing the Bolles case. As it turned out, though, Harris took his job seriously. Appearing before a gathering of lawyers in Phoenix, he declared that the city had become a paradise for gangsters working in close collaboration with local officials. He said that given this situation there was no hope of fighting effectively against crime in Arizona. He laid particular emphasis on the gangsters' financial interests in local business, particularly in real estate.

Harris also said that in 1972 President Nixon had personally asked the editors of the *Arizona Republic* to call off its public probe into the underworld connections of a certain promi-

nent figure in national politics. Harris did not reveal the politician's name, but it was remembered that Bolles had been working at that time on an exposé of Goldwater and his associates. The newspaper had bowed to Nixon's request, and Harris said that documents concerning the case had disappeared from a safe in the County Attorney's office.

Meanwhile the powerful forces that had attempted a coverup in the Bolles case began a new campaign. It was claimed that Harris's remarks had made it impossible for Adamson to get a fair trial. The County Attorney's generalizations, it was said, had distracted the court from the matter in hand and created an atmosphere in which the poor gangster would be hard pressed to defend himself. As a result of this maneuver Harris was taken off the case. The authorities demanded that he hand over all the evidence he had collected; later the materials disappeared.

The case was then passed along to Judge Rufus Coulter, but in just a few days he too stepped aside. Obviously the powers that be had decided to draw out and complicate the judicial process until no one could any longer make head or tail of the case.

Still another judge, Ben C. Birdsall, was put in charge of the case. Suddenly events took an unexpected turn. Adamson calmly admitted that he had planted the bomb that killed Bolles. He also said that a certain James Robison had pressed the button on the remote detonating device. Both of them, he said, had been hired by Max A. Dunlap, a local construction contractor, who had acted at the bidding of Phoenix multimillionaire Kemper Marley.

As it turned out, Adamson had been promised his life in return for this confession. (He might have been sentenced to death.) The police immediately arrested Robison and Dunlap, but the court held that there was not yet sufficient evidence against Marley to arrest him.

Meanwhile Adamson also testified that he and Robison had also been hired by Dunlap for yet another killing. This time the victim was to be Arizona Attorney General Bruce Babbit. Once again powerful forces behind the scenes arranged for Adamson's testimony to be held insufficient evidence against Marley.

After Adamson's confession the Bolles case was officially closed. Somewhere it had been decided that a few pawns could be sacrificed to mollify public opinion. Moreover, the pawns themselves got off lightly, considering the gravity of their crime: they did not lose their lives, and no doubt they were assured that people in high places would not forget about them. It was

no accident that Adamson had made his confession at just the right moment, as if on command. But who had issued the command?

The group of reporters that conducted an independent investigation into Bolles's death concluded that behind the murder was an alliance of three forces: big business, politics, and the law. And big business, in this context, is naturally meant to include business owned and operated by organized crime.

It has already been noted that in recent years more and more of the leaders of organized crime have taken up residence in Arizona. These days it is often said, and with good reason, that the state is ruled by the "Three B's": business, the banks, and Bonnano. Joe Bonnano is known throughout America as a leader of the Cosa Nostra. He came to the home state of Barry Goldwater, Arizona's foremost politician, for business reasons. Columnists wise in the ways of Arizona politics say that power in the state is concentrated in the hands of Goldwater, the John Birch Society (a fascist-type national organization), and the Cosa Nostra.

The murder of Don Bolles and the subsequent investigation threw only a glimmer of light on the secrets of Arizona politics. Even the newspaper where Bolles had worked refused to publish the conclusions of the reporters who had worked on their own to get to the bottom of his murder. One Arizona lawyer and politician, who asked that his name not be revealed, was quoted in the press as saying that even Bolles's own newspaper had ties to the Cosa Nostra.

Now let us return to the leader of Arizona's gangsters, Joe Bonnano. That title, incidentally, is probably too modest: Bonnano is one of the outstanding figures in the Cosa Nostra, a national leader. When Carlo Gambino, the head of the New York gangs and hence the most influential of the Cosa Nostra's bosses, died in New York it was Carmine Galante, who had always been Joe Bonnano's right-hand man, who took his place. People in the know said that the intention was for Galante to hold power in New York only until Bonnano's son, Salvatore, had acquired sufficient experience to be ready to step into the job.

Bonnano himself lives quietly in Arizona, not far from the Mexican border. This circumstance is noteworthy; it is across that same border that narcotics are smuggled into the USA. The gangster boss has situated his luxurious residence at a strategic vantage point from which he can keep an eye on the operation that brings him and his colleagues millions in profits. Like other leaders of organized crime, Bonnano leads the life

of a wealthy and respectable citizen. He goes to church (he even donated an organ to his parish), is active in charity, and has entrée into local high society. He says that he is a dealer in real estate. It is also known that his legal business activities in Arizona include farming, and in particular cotton growing. A typical American multimillionaire!

Joe Bonnano settled in Arizona long ago. In 1954 there was a slight stir over his criminal activities, and some people said that he ought to be deported. (Obviously there is no way to put a gangster boss of his rank behind bars in the USA.) An investigation was launched. Many of Arizona's wealthiest citizens testified on his behalf, saying that he was an influential and highly respected businessman. Bonnano's most notable defender was none other than the Arizona Supreme Court Justice. After that the gangland leader was of course left in peace.

That was back in 1954. Informed sources say that the influx of gangsters began in earnest in the 60s and continues to this day at an accelerated pace. It can easily be imagined what power and influence gangsters must have in Arizona at present, if as early as 1954 they were beyond the reach of the law. By the way, the son of the Arizona Supreme Court Justice who once testified on behalf of Bonnano is now a Senator.

This is the sort of weight that Joe Bonnano and the Cosa Nostra carry in the state of Arizona (and not only there). This is the sinister force — in addition to business, politics, and the law — that reporter Don Bolles ran afoul of.

As he lay bleeding on the asphalt, Bolles named John Adamson, the Mafia, and Emprise as his killers. It is worth taking a closer look at the last of these three; this will bring to a close the sad story of Bolles's death, and show how tightly legal and illegal business are interwoven in the USA.

The original home of Emprise was Buffalo, New York. Like most modern American corporations, it does business in a wide variety of fields, but it started out as a small firm dealing in peanuts. Such an innocent beginning! The business was founded in 1915, by the three sons of a Polish tailor who had emigrated to the United States. Later popcorn and hotdogs were added to its stock in trade, which was sold at sporting events.

Little by little the youngest son, Louie Jacobs, took charge of the business. In 1927 he and his peanuts, popcorn, and hotdogs gained admission to major-league baseball parks. Baseball is vastly popular in the USA, and the snack concession at a

major ballpark is a sure road to financial success. Louie Jacobs was soon doing a thriving business. He used his wealth to carve out a niche for himself in the world of professional sport. Louie Jacobs knew how to manage his money, all right! He began to extend loans at interest. Step by step he expanded into other fields of business, and eventually the Emprise Corporation was created to handle all his diverse operations. Baseball fans still numbered among the corporation's chief clients, although to be sure football, basketball, and hockey fans were now included too. And it was not only the fans that Jacobs did business with. He used his capital to acquire several professional teams and then broadened his interests to take in horse and dog tracks. Race tracks mean betting, and people like Louie Jacobs can make fortunes on that. Fortunes, then, were what he proceded to make.

In 1960 the branch of Emprise that continued to be concerned with snack sales at stadiums achieved a major success: it was granted the concession for the Olympic Games in Rome. By the start of the 70s Emprise included one hundred and sixty-two different firms. By that time its stadium concessions alone were doing $ 100 million in business each year. The main reason for the corporation's success continued to be Jacobs's ability to extend loans at interest at the right time to the right people — especially businessmen in the world of professional sports. These loans inevitably brought him together with the gangster businessmen of the Cosa Nostra, who had long since entrenched themselves in professional sports and especially in the lucrative business of racing. They were not only owners and co-owners of various teams, but also organized illegal betting operations. Louie Jacobs's connections with gangsters became a topic of discussion in the courts, in Congress, and in the press. He had risen to such financial heights by that time, however, that American justice had trouble reaching him. And he continued to prosper.

It was when Emprise acquired a dog track in Arizona that reporter Don Bolles started down the road that brought him to such an agonizing death. Being already an expert on the Mafia and corruption, he was quick to see that Emprise was a gangster front. We know now how much Bolles managed to find out. He learned, for example, that the police had conducted a secret check into Emprise's activities. Just at the time when the investigator was to make his findings public he was suddenly hospitalized. Later he vanished without a trace, together with all the materials he had collected.

With tireless persistence Bolles traveled from state to state investigating the activities of Emprise and its ties with the Cosa Nostra. On returning to Arizona he wrote a series of articles on this subject. There was concern in high places, and for good reason. Sam Steiger, a former Congressional Representative, said: "Bolles brought me what was really the unpublished results of his trip around the country, and it was kind of fascinating. And then, almost at the same time, the SEC (Security and Exchange Commission) people brought me the documentation that Emprise was in partners with the Zerilli family in Detroit at the Hazel Park race-track up there."

Soon five states had opened investigations into Emprise's ties with the Cosa Nostra. But still the corporation was not brought to court. Finally, in 1972, official charges were brought against six individuals and one corporation. The individuals were members of the Mafia; the corporation was Emprise. This was a blow to the firm, of course, but by no means a mortal one. In June of 1972 yet another blow fell: *Sports Illustrated* published an article on the criminal operations of Emprise, together with a photograph of Louie Jacobs captioned "The Godfather of Sports." The article implied that the phenomenally rapid growth of Emprise's financial might was due to its business ties to the Cosa Nostra. In answer to these charges the corporation's lawyers brought suit, claiming that competitors were trying to discredit Emprise so as to drive it out of business.

For seven years Don Bolles and many others continued to offer proof that Emprise was a legal front for the Cosa Nostra. During this period Louie Jacobs went to his reward, and many speeches were made and articles written. And then, suddenly, all talk of Emprise died away in Arizona. In an interview granted to the press, Sam Steiger blamed the character of American "justice" for the collapse of the campaign against the corporation.

Don Bolles was murdered for his part in that campaign. Sam Steiger's enemies used other means against him: he failed to win a seat in the Senate, even though he had been widely regarded as one of Arizona's most promising political leaders. No one can say for sure what Steiger suffered when his political career was wrecked, or what else he may have been threatened with. But all of a sudden, after long years of fighting corruption, he not only gave up but publicly repented. The bomb that had killed Bolles had broken his will. Emprise immediately

withdrew its million-dollar suit against the former Congressman, sparing him further court costs. Even scandal-jaded Arizona was surprised.

The group of reporters who investigated Bolles's murder published their findings in a series of twenty-three articles on corruption and organized crime in Arizona. More than forty experienced reporters, from twenty-eight organizations, spent six months collecting the material. Many of the publications they worked for refused to print the report. Among them were the *Washington Star*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Arizona Republic*, the paper Bolles had worked on. Other's published only a greatly abbreviated version of the report. Why?

The answer can easily be found in the report itself. Here are a few excerpts.

"Arizona has become perhaps the single most concentrated corridor of illegal drug entry in the U.S."

"Organized crime, dominated by such jet-age mobsters as ... Joe Bonnano ... is staging an invasion of Phoenix, Tucson, and other Arizona cities."

"Goldwater Tied to the Mob"— that was the title of one section of the report, which says that throughout the almost thirty years that Barry Goldwater, his brother Robert, and their close friend Harry Rosenzweig (a former head of the state's Republican Party) have held sway in Phoenix and all of Arizona, there was organized crime in the state — something that these leaders, who maintained friendly relations with the heads of the Mafia, accepted as a matter of course.

At this point it seems that a few words should be said about Barry Goldwater. His reactionary views have long been known, and now we find that he also had underworld connections. This is the same Barry Goldwater who once ran for President of the United States as the candidate of the Republican Party, and was defeated by the Democrat Lyndon Johnson.

The journalists' report on corruption in Arizona said Goldwater rose so high in the political world because of his close ties with the closest associates of Meyer Lansky, one of the biggest underworld leaders. Lansky, it would appear, had no time for personal dealings with Senator Goldwater; his assistants could take care of that. One of them was Gus Greenbaum, Lansky's right-hand man, who was a close friend of the Goldwater brothers. In fact Barry was present in person at Greenbaum's funeral.

Goldwater had no choice but to answer these charges, although he did it through clenched teeth. "I have never heard of Meyer Lansky," he said. Every child has heard that name in the USA, but somehow Goldwater, one of the country's leading politicians, had remained ignorant of it! The reason for so brazen an answer is clear to see: it lets Goldwater out of answering a great many other questions about Lansky.

What about Joe Bonnano, then? He has lived for several decades in Goldwater's home state. "Never heard" will not do here. This is what Goldwater answered when asked about his ties with Bonnano: "I have known of only one man in Tucson — Bonnano or something like that — who bought a race-track and later sold it. I have not had any indications from law officers, nor have I had any indications from *anybody* that any members of the Mafia have moved into Arizona." Goldwater must really have had his back against the wall to utter such a bald-faced lie!

Goldwater's friend and associate, Harry Rosenzweig, adopted the same tactic. He said that he knew nothing about gangland "families" in Arizona, and said he did not know the Bonnanos, although he knew they lived in Tucson. "Is Bonnano still alive?" he asked. In the light of what has gone before, there is no need to comment on these outrageous lies.

The behavior of Goldwater and his associates shows once again that Don Bolles had to be killed because he knew too much, and wanted to tell his fellow citizens what he knew.

The murder of Don Bolles was nothing out of the ordinary for the United States. The Cosa Nostra is a corporation like any other. It has diversified interests, just as the Emprise Corporation, for example, has. Murder by contract? Well of course! Nothing could be simpler, as long as you've got the money. The price depends on the victim, on his social standing. For an ordinary reporter like Bolles it was a mere $ 10,000. In recent years the Cosa Nostra has devoted most of its attention to penetrating into legitimate business, as the story of the Emprise Corporation clearly shows.

Such is the truth, the way things really stand in the USA. The tragic death of Don Bolles threw light once again on the hidden sides of American life that best of all characterize a society founded on cold cash, a society that tramples on the most elementary human rights in the name of gain, of profit, which is to be gotten at any price, by any means.

The words of the American journalist Martin Tallberg are a sort of epitath for Bolles: "Arizonans may not realize it, but many people around the world are watching the events in this state as an indicator of the U.S. resolve in the area of human rights. Can Arizona clean up its own mess, or will it be business as usual with a lip-service veneer? Many in the world community are asking if Americans are really interested in defending the rights of the average person from oppressive evils, or are they just wrapped up in making the fast buck. Arizona's approach to its crime problem could furnish an answer."

AFTERWORD

In 1920 Walter Lippman wrote that all the hysteria of the times, all the intolerance, hatred, and fear spreading endlessly throughout the world, was based on one lie, the lie about Russia. That was true then, and it remains true today. But another decisive factor in the politics of the USA has emerged since that time: Washington's inflated imperial ambitions. The roots of these claims to hegemony go far back into history. They are closely bound up with the aggressive nature of capitalism, of which American imperialism, reared on blood and violence, is one of the most vivid expressions.

The expansionist foreign policy of the USA was clearly formulated in the first twenty-five years of the nineteenth century. In the so-called Monroe Doctrine, the USA claimed the entire western hemisphere as a zone of its exclusive influence. As time passed and the appetites of the imperialists grew, this was gradually broadened to include all regions of the globe where Wall Street had interests. US foreign policy was now aimed at establishing a Pax Americana, a world order under which any country at all could be regarded as an American fief. This thrust has been especially marked since the 1940s. Unlike many other countries, the United States emerged from the war with its enormous economic potential intact. What was more, its masters were intoxicated by their short-lived monopoly on atomic weapons.

Towards the end of 1983 President Reagan, in an attempt to justify the USA's military presence in Lebanon and its armed invasion of Grenada, told the country: "Now there was a time when our national security was based on a standing army here within our borders and shore batteries of artillery along our coast... The world has changed. Today our national security can be threatened in far-away places. It's up to all of us to be aware of the strategic importance of such places and to be able to identify them."

According to American statistisc, at the close of 1983 the USA had more than half a million military personnel stationed abroad (almost 350,000 in Europe, another 150,000 in the Pacific Basin and the Far East). Particularly noteworthy is

the increase in the number of American officers and men in Britain and Italy, where the new American missiles have been deployed. Here we see put into practice the aggressive policy under which practically the whole world is a zone of the USA's "vital interests." There is at least one side to those interests that Washington leaders seem to have no intention of hiding. Here is what Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger told America's business élite in New York: "President Reagan said recently: 'We are a nation with global responsibilities.' Consider how that affects our defense policy... For example, the fact that the factories of Japan and Western Europe are fuelled by Middle East oil means that our long-standing national commitment to the security of NATO and Northeast Asia now extends to the Middle East. And what of the dependence of our own high-tech industries on strategic materials found only in Africa and Latin America? We get 60 per cent of our cobalt from sub-Saharan Africa, cobalt which is essential to producing jet engines and many other critical industrial products. And what of your markets, the lifeblood of America's commerce, spread around the globe?... Our vital interests and commitments are widespread..."

These "vital interests", alas, are not simply an internal affair of the United States. The policy based on them threatens the whole world with a nuclear war.

Quite a few years have passed since the appearance of Nevil Shute's novel *On the Beach*. Stanley Kramer's film based on the book is also well known. Both sound a grave warning about the possibilitiy of a nuclear armageddon. Today that warning is more urgent than ever. And with every passing day the bell of Hiroshima can be heard more and more clearly. Is it for each and all of us that it tolls? Will the world be devoured in a nuclear conflagration? This is the question that history has posed, and there is no avoiding it. Everyone must answer it by doing everything in his power to prevent the worst.

Here is a thought that was expressed in 1983, in one of the discussions at the World Assembly for Peace and Life Against Nuclear War in Prague: "When the house you share is burning, you don't ask the neighbor who is helping you fight the flames whether he is a Communist or a conservative, a Catholic or a Muslim. The main thing is to put out the fire that endangers you both as quickly as possible." We must not allow the house we all share — the Earth — to go up in the flames of a nuclear disaster.

REQUEST TO READERS

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Vladimir Nikolayev, a Soviet writer on current affairs, is the author of fourteen books about the United States, of which *The Americans* is the latest. Nikolayev invites his readers to take a close look at the America of the 80s. He has a way of seeing something new in what would appear to be well-known facts. Political life, business and taxes, movies and television, morality, crime and the law – all of these are discussed, and most of the comments come from Americans themselves. The author carefully weighs these opinions. He is in no hurry to draw conclusions. An outsider's point of view can only be of use, he believes, if every attempt is made to understand before judging. He hopes, and with good reason, that such efforts can help to further mutual understanding.

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